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CURRENT COMMENT.

THE great Russian drive against Warsaw was suddenly stayed at the eleventh hour, and the repulse, so we read, was turned into a rout, the Poles capturing village after village and no end of war-material and prisoners. While not denying all this, it is well to remember that we have had just such reports before and to wait awhile before subscribing to the French loan which is now, by an interesting coincidence, being negotiated here. These miracles of Polish valour, planned by French strategy, executed by French officers and backed by French resources, may all be true; still, one must bear in mind that the reports come from not exactly disinterested sources. Abe Potash remarked early in the war, as far back as the winter of 1914, that "the prisoners what them Germans takes every morning in the *Staats-Zeitung* is something you wouldn't believe at all."

A FACT which makes one suspect the accounts of the débâcle to be perhaps a bit over-emphasized, is that so many of our newspapers still so strongly advise Poland to make peace. They fall in quite closely with the British angle of vision rather than the French; and their advice, in fact, is one for the Poles and two for the French. If anything were to be gained by further fighting, or if the prospects really were anything like as bright as the news-dispatches say, it is doubtful whether we should hear these loud antiphons of encouragement towards peace at Minsk. Our own belief remains that peace will be made, that the Soviet government will give clear proof that it has no desire for conquest or design of exploitation, and that the Poles will get even better terms than the Entente would, in its innermost heart, care to see them get.

FOR instance, has anyone pondered the purport of the seventh article in the schedule of terms laid down by the Soviet Government on 10 August, repeated as the twelfth article of the schedule laid down on 19 August by M. Danishevsky at Minsk? According to it, Poland must give free land to the families of all Polish citizens killed, wounded or incapacitated in the war. One wonders what German, Austrian, French and British families, similarly situated, are going to think about that; there was nothing like it brought forward at Versailles. One also wonders what the great landed proprietors of

Poland are thinking about it at this moment. As for the Governments of France, England and the United States, what they think about it simply wouldn't be fit to repeat. Small wonder that a Government which would do a thing like that should stir poor benighted Mr. Bainbridge Colby to an irruption of wrath; a little incoherent in places, with an occasional lapse in grammar which no one would hold up against him—we occasionally drift into pretty poor grammar ourselves when we get properly worked up about something—but heartfelt and sincere.

AN odd little item slipped in on an inside page of the New York *Sun* last week. It was dated 18 August, and read as follows:

The Polish newspaper *Courier Pozanski*, printed in Mahrisch-Ostrau, publishes the contents of the British note to Poland, delivered to the Government in Warsaw by Sir Horace Rumbold, British minister. The note covers the following points:

1. That the Polish Government, during the peace negotiations with the Russian Bolsheviks, may not enter into a discussion of any terms which restrict Polish independence.
2. That Poland must be prepared to hold out in defence of her independence and to maintain under arms an army with a minimum strength of twenty-two divisions.
3. That the Entente promises to send munitions of war, supplies and officers to aid the Poles.
4. That the Entente guarantees that the Polish armies will not be cut off in the rear.
5. That the Polish commander-in-chief may not exercise other than military authority, and must follow the advice of the Entente.
6. That the line of the Vistula may not be abandoned, but must be defended to the end.

This is something of a puzzler. It may be an invention of the Polish newspaper, or it may be something which the paper unsuspectingly picked up, like the Sisson documents. Internal evidence, however, speaks eloquently for its genuineness. The first, fourth and fifth articles, especially, do not, even in abstract form, sound like inventions.

WE wonder when that note was concocted and delivered. M. Millerand said that the Polish question was discussed at Spa, and our guess is that these interesting little amenities were promulgated at that auspicious conference. The note speaks of the Entente; so one infers that the Entente was alive and kicking when it was written. The time, therefore, would almost certainly be between Spa and the official signing of the Entente's death-certificate by the French Foreign Office in its manifesto recognizing Brother Wrangel. Probably the Soviet Government knows of this note; those untutored heathen in Moscow are so confoundedly smart about getting hold of things that they should never see. Probably they have prayerfully considered the third and fourth articles, in particular; and they may have formed their own opinion of Mr. Lloyd George's recent public attitude towards Poland. If British labour was only beating at an open door for theatrical effect, one would say that the door must have sprung open suddenly after Sir Horace Rumbold was commissioned to serve this notice on Poland. The Spa conference is still numbered among recent events.

PERHAPS, however, Mr. George's attitude was only part of a deep design to get Poland well trounced and out of the way in order, on the one hand, to do his French asso-

ciate in the eye, and, on the other hand, to promote peace between Russia and Great Britain. One can believe anything these days; international affairs, if one even pretends to take them seriously, are the greatest guessing contest ever seen in the world, and one guess is as good as another. Even Mr. Harding modestly excuses himself for commenting on foreign affairs by saying that there are only two people in this country who know all the facts—and we suspect that even then the Senator is exaggerating. In a more cynical view of the Spa conference, Mr. George's share in the note to Poland reminds one of Mr. Wing's fine story of Cousin Mary Ant'nette Sparks. She was very ill and a consultation was called, "an' finally old Doc Blithers says, 'Gentlemen, I'm in favour of givin' her a grain of strychnine.' 'Why, man, it'll kill her,' says the others. 'Well, what if it does?' the Doc says. 'She ain't worth a cuss as she is.'"

It is quite possible to attribute to Mr. George this excellent and humanitarian impulse towards Poland, and thus quite reasonably account for his acquiescence in Sir Horace Rumbold's errand. But really we believe that it is a mistake to impute for as much as a moment anything like a direct and consistent policy to Mr. George and his associates. They are only so many floundering castaways, so many bits of flotsam thrown up out of a political Malebolge, and as they are carried this way or that, by currents and cross-currents, they grasp at anything that comes in reach—anything that will keep their noses above water for even one poor gasping moment. We know what our own politicians are, and it is a most salutary thing to remember that the politicians of other lands are precisely like them; to remember, indeed, that they must be like them, else they could not be politicians. To take anything that happens as an indication of settled policy or steadfast purpose, is to over-dignify these men and misapprehend them utterly.

GOING back to the subject of the French loan, which one somehow always thinks of in connexion with the reported Polish successes, we wish we could understand it. We have read a good deal about it and had it explained to us, but having no head for finance or figures, the more it is explained, the more uncertain and elusive the whole thing seems. France and England it appears are on a sort of joint note for 500 million dollars, payable in October. England says she can and will pay her half; and since it is a joint obligation, she must pay France's half, too, if France does not poney up. So much is clear. But now it seems that France can pay about 100 millions, and wants what is called a "refunding loan" of 150 millions; and here is where we get all tangled up. What is a refunding loan, and what for—how does it work? Who gets refunded, and why? Does France pay us 250 millions and then we refund her 150 millions? We do not see the point of the refunding business at all. We are perfectly frank about it, not knowing anything of such matters—literature being our line of trade—and we simply offer our readers the facts as we get them, hoping they will understand all about it, for we do not.

WE have, however, occasionally run across something remotely resembling this refunding business, in the course of our favourite pursuits; though the plan seemed to be a little different in each case. There was the method of the Rev. Mr. Stiggins, for instance. According to Mr. Weller, he called at the "Marquis of Granby" on Monday and borrowed eighteenpence; on Tuesday, he called for a shilling to make it half a crown; on Wednesday, for another half-crown to make it five shillings; "and goes on doubling till he gets it up to a five-pound note in no time, like them sums in the 'rithmetic books 'bout the nails in the horse's shoes, Sammy."

THEN there was the system of M. Parmentier's gifted countryman, Schaunard. It is some time since we read the "Vie de Bohême," but as we remember, it ran sub-

stantially thus: Schaunard would borrow, say, five dollars from A. Then he would borrow another five dollars from B., and refund a couple of dollars to A. Then another five dollars from C., refunding two dollars to B., and half a dollar to A. Then another five dollars from D., refunding about half of it around among A., B., and C., in the same general proportions. Thus by being pretty diligent about borrowing and refunding, and having plenty of available sources, Schaunard had a good comfortable income. We have always firmly believed that what is called international credit was invented and promulgated by Schaunard, for it is precisely his system. If there should be a general show-down in international credit—that is, if all the creditor nations demanded their pay in commodities—one would pray to be alive to see the fun. We hope M. Parmentier succeeds in getting his "refunding loan," whatever that is, because it will be nothing but paper anyway, and he might just as well have it as not—what is a little paper between friends? When M. Parmentier discusses credit that is really based on commodities—when he begins to talk in terms of bull-steak, potatoes, wearing-apparel, coal, steel and such like—then this paper will promptly sit up and take notice.

"TROUBLES come not single spies but in battalions," mutters Mr. Lloyd George these days as he cracks his breakfast egg and glances at his morning paper. Mannix, Wrangel, Ghandi, Smillie, Lenin—always Lenin—and now Feisul and his Arabs. And precious cold comfort the Premier gets from his papers. Says the conservative *Daily Telegraph* anent the inhospitable attitude of the Arabs:

It is clear enough that we are not particularly welcome and no substantial number of inhabitants appreciates our efforts to bestow on them the blessings of a higher culture and more complex civilization. The best we can do for them now is to make them capable of defending themselves and transfer our powers to some fairly stable native administration if one can be found.

Now isn't that delicious—and so prettily put. And listen to Lord Northcliffe in the *Times*:

We know we are confronted with a Mesopotamian war on a considerable scale in which 100,000 British Indian troops are engaged. Order will eventually be restored, but only at considerable sacrifice of life, which will upset the budget still more.

"Which will upset the budget still more"—yes, that's the worst of all this killing, it does upset the budget. Goodness knows what would happen if America were not always ready to keep things going with her money.

THESE are the days that try the stoutest burlap in which cats were ever bagged. Hardly a day passes but some awkward little truth slips out into the air and is caught by industrious pencils and then, after many hazardous adventures, ending up in a linotype machine, is born again; this time on fresh clean strips of paper which go out into all the ways of the world. Those precious moments when we meet face to face these wandering bits of truth, are fit to be treasured through a long life. Thus at Butte, Montana, a few days ago, the hills must have rejoiced and the mountains and valleys been exceeding glad when Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt said:

The Republicans are playing a shell game on the American people. They are still busy circulating the story that [in the League of Nations] England has six votes to America's one. It is just the other way. As a matter of fact, the United States has about twelve votes in the Assembly. Until last week I had two of them myself, and now Secretary Daniels has them. You know I have had something to do with the running of a couple of little republics. The facts are that I wrote Haiti's Constitution myself, and, if I do say it, I think it is a pretty good Constitution.

Mr. Roosevelt went on to say that Haiti, Santo Domingo, Panama, Cuba, and the other Central American countries, which have at least twelve votes in the League's Assembly, all regarded Uncle Sam as a guardian and big brother, and that this country practically would have their

votes in the League. Now why, in the name of goodness, didn't President Wilson tell us that himself long ago, and so have saved us all this bother?

THINK now for a moment of how it will be when the League of Nations holds its first meeting with Uncle Sam joining in. All the nations will be there. The representatives of England and her five self-governing dominions enter the great hall together (the Labour premier of Australia and the Nationalist premier of South Africa casting sinister glances at the gentleman from Downing Street). Suddenly just outside the Assembly-hall the sound of a sharp military command is heard. It is Captain W. W. Gilmer, of the United States Marines, until lately Governor of Guam, calling to attention the round dozen of diplomats representing Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt's little Republics. "Now, then," he says briskly, "you fellows have got to do as you're told and don't you forget it. No whistling here, you from Guam! Attention!—forward march!" And with fine military precision the little company walks in to take its place in the great Assembly of the Nations.

WE wonder what the next President of these United States thinks when he reads such an item of news as this which caught our eye a few days ago on the front page of a leading newspaper:

At a meeting of representatives of Karelian communities called at Petrozavodsk by the rebel leader Gylling, the new dictator of Eastern Karelia, to decide as to the future form of government in Karelia, fifteen per cent voted in favour of a Bolshevik community, eighteen per cent for the status quo and sixty-seven per cent for an independent Karelian republic.

This kind of thing must rather take the heart out of a fellow who is doing his darndest to lead the world back to normalcy. Who knows but that this wretched fellow Gylling will be clamouring for recognition next March and—where is Karelia anyway?

Now that the Nineteenth Amendment seems to be on the way, perhaps our women will all be voting next November. We wonder whether most of them will see so much in it as they expected. They could not be enfranchised at a time more favourable for determining, after all their labours, just what sort of a get they have got. A new voter, turned out with a brand-new vote and nothing to use it on, is in a bad way. Looking over the assortment of candidates and issues offered to the electorate, we wonder what the thrifty and experienced instinct of appraisal which the sex is said to possess, will make of the lot. We rather expect that some, at least, will decide that the option is pretty skimpy, and may be led to put about the proper discount on the brethren who are forever telling us that in this great democracy the instrument of reform is always in our hands. We have great hopes of our women. The ballot was all well enough as a starter. Their real fight, however, is to get all the cant and buncombe and hypocrisy, the fundamental sex-discriminations and disabilities all swept out of the way, in order that they themselves and their ballot can become measurably effective, and not be wasted on the kind of degrading and ludicrous humbug that confronts them in their first political campaign.

WOMAN, thank fortune, is a born inquisitor, and may carry into public life the same dry explicitness of inquiry that she has long employed upon John Henry when she greets him on the stair-landing at 2 a. m., daylight-saving time. Moreover, while the poet may be right about hell having no fury like a woman scorned, we personally would far rather take chances with one than with a woman who had been bamboozled and become aware of it. If even a fair proportion of our women take politics seriously, we can foresee that there will be joy in the presence of the angels when some candidate's pre-election promises come home to roost. Much as the editors of this paper would relish the honours and emoluments of public

office, we think we can manage to rub along without them as long as the Nineteenth Amendment remains in force.

FROM the point of view of the prospective apartment-house builder in our large cities the future looks black. He is caught in a vicious financial circle. If he does not build, the present shortage of apartments and the increased demand for them coincident with the normal increase of new urban populations will not only keep up the present high rents but tend, in the course of things, to send them even higher. This of course invites over-bidding for his property from prospective speculators. But high rents and speculation in apartments mean a genuine public resentment, which is as likely as not to find expression in ill-considered legislation. This legislation may easily become so oppressive that, rather than build, the owner will sell what he has, even at a small sacrifice, and retire from the game. On the other hand, if he attempts to build and increase the supply relative to the demand, thus lowering rents to a reasonable figure, he is again "up against it." Reckoning even a modest 7% return on his capital investment, over a period of say ten years, he has to consider the present inflated price of materials, the high cost and the admitted inefficiency of labour. Naturally enough, he would prefer to wait until a general deflation has set in; for if he builds now he has to reckon on a standard of rents sufficient to give return on these extraordinary initial expenses of new building. Supposing he does so reckon and decides to build; then the very fact of new houses increases the supply of apartments and tends to lower what he can get for rents. In other words, his own public spirit may be responsible for the fact that in two or three years' time there are sufficient apartments to throw his original reckoning, due to a fall in rents since then, entirely askew. The result naturally is that nothing very much is being built. And the apartment hunter?—why, who thinks of him? He pays for the whole thing in any event. A pretty system and a neat one; at least so you will think, if you try to get a place to live in in any of our more crowded cities this fall.

NEW YORK has done well in music this summer. The fifty-five concerts given at the stadium by the National Symphony Orchestra attracted audiences of 4,000 to 10,000. The record of programmes shows sixty-nine composers and 141 works. Exclusives of encores, there were 358 pieces of standard concert-music presented. In the early autumn there will be a season of opera by the San Carlo Company at the Manhattan, to revive our dear and grateful memories of Oscar Hammerstein; and there is promise also of a season by the Italian Lyric Federation. One of the most encouraging things one can do is to pick up a musical trade journal and note the popular progress of the art throughout the country. Let the reader try it, and we venture to say he will be most agreeably surprised. If America is really accepting its heritage of music, it may some day accept its heritage of literature as well; and some day, it may even awaken to a sense of its greatest heritage of all, its language. How incredible, as Turgenev said of Russian speech, that the English tongue, in its nobleness and abundance, should not be the gift of a great people! The time may yet come when Americans will respect it and realize what an inestimable privilege it is to have a native use of it.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly.

It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

LAST WORDS ON A NEW PARTY.

THE consideration of third-party politics, especially the enterprise of our old friends the Committee of Forty-eight, moves us to reflect on the advantages of living in the country. Our misgivings about the third-party movement, our sense of its being foredoomed to failure, and our inability to let ourselves be quite carried away with it, are due to our purely accidental possession of these advantages. Of the six editors of this paper, five are country-bred, and three still keep a foothold in the country; and it is in the country that one most easily discerns the forces that really keep routine politics going. It is there that one gets the clearest view of the place of political theory, and sees how much, or how little, theory has to do with the determination of political allegiance. All the time we were reading the excellent articles which Mr. Amos Pinchot was kind enough to contribute to recent issues of this paper, we could not help wondering how it was that he had made so little of these same advantages; for Mr. Pinchot also lives in the country. If he had studied the habits of his neighbours up in Pike County, and marked the factors that determine their political attachments, it would seem incredible that he should have had even the very moderate hopefulness that he expressed in behalf of a third party's chances.

The Federal machine depends on the State machine, and the State machine on the county machine. It is the county that gives us an exhibit of basic politics. The serious student of politics, in our judgment, had best get his preliminary bearings from the county. Proceeding from the county to the city, or the State, or the nation, he will be proceeding logically *a minori ad majus*, and will find understandable a great many phenomena that, otherwise approached, would be confusing and misleading—that would, indeed, almost inevitably land him in a number of miscalculations of the first magnitude.

In Mr. Pinchot's own county, then, let us say—we have never been there—there is a sheriff, a treasurer, a clerk, three or four commissioners or chosen freeholders, an assessor, a judge and sundry minor officials. These constitute a kind of standing committee on politics. They are in politics a dozen hours a day every day in the year; and, curiously, they are paid for it by the people of the county—paid to make a business of it. Each one of these has an entourage; he has a family, neighbours, friends, acquaintances, and he is always trying to enlarge this entourage, to strengthen its solidarity and extend its ramifications. A man's vote, even on local matters, depends hardly at all upon the point at issue, but upon his relation to this entourage. In national matters, this relation almost absolutely governs his vote. His loyalty to the Republican or Democratic party is finally found to be just about as strictly personal as his loyalty to the Presbyterian or the Methodist Church. Ten to one he knows nothing about the basic doctrines of the Presbyterian Church, and cares as little; he belongs to it because his friends do, or because he likes the minister, or because the congregation is more or less made up of his own sort of people. Least of all does he consider that membership in that church is related in a vital way to his eternal happiness or the salvation of his soul. Similarly, he does not count on his allegiance to Mr. Harding's party, say, as vitally affecting his economic welfare; and as for political doctrine, ten to one, again, he did not even glance through

the Chicago platform. If the Republican convention had come out for a policy of drowning all the girl-babies at birth, it would have made surprisingly little difference with Mr. Harding's majority next November. This is not cynicism; the doctrines of predestination and election, as applied to infants, have not much interfered, as far as we can see, with the progress of the Presbyterian Church in this country.

What the city-bred advocates of a third party, then, fail to see, what even Mr. Pinchot, with all his conspicuous acuteness and ability, has failed, we think, to see, is that Mr. Harding is going to be elected this autumn because Uncle John McDaniels is going to vote for him; and that Uncle John will do this, not because he is all warmed up about the League of Nations, or for any such reason, but because his son Henry married the daughter of old Zack Minkler who lives over Toonerville way, and the families have been friends for years. Zack is one of the substantial men of the county, and his position on public affairs is much regarded. He farmed a large farm successfully in his earlier years, but of late has taken chiefly to farming his tenants and mortgagees, and is a bulwark of conservatism. He sometimes comes over from Toonerville and visits the county-seat, making use of the trolley that meets all the trains; and the skipper respects him highly, as do all the boys around the court-house, and they consult him and ask his advice and find that they are all of his way of thinking about Mr. Harding and about the prospects for a great victory in November. Zack went to Washington once, and saw the sights as the guest of his congressman who made a great deal of him and treated him in a very distinguished way, introducing him to two United States Senators and a member of the Fish Commission. This experience impressed him, and he is fond of talking about it even yet.

The problem for a third party, then, is to capture Uncle John's vote; and he does not impress us as by any means easy game. True, twice in his life he has voted the Democratic ticket out of resentment at his party for overplaying its hand; just as he was once at outs with some of the brethren in the Presbyterian Church and went for six years to the Methodist Church across the way, which was attended by pretty good people, all of them friends and neighbours, so that he got along quite comfortably and was almost minded not to return to his old allegiance. But it would have taken an unthinkable deal of pressure to turn Uncle John's back on both the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches and send him to the little Unitarian meeting-house half a mile down the road, which none of the neighbours ever attend, and is kept up largely by a summer colony of city people, and marks time during the rest of the year. The Unitarian minister called on Uncle John once and explained the points of doctrinal difference with the Presbyterians, and left him entirely satisfied and 'lowin as how everything the preacher said was so; still, he could never be induced to darken the doors of the Unitarian chapel as much as once. This experience indicates precisely how Uncle John would stand with a third party. Mr. Pinchot or Mr. McCurdy could easily show him that all sound economic theory is on their side, that his salvation really lies that way; but all his personal loyalties, both first-best and second-best, are against them, and they would prevail.

One thing, and one only, would perhaps carry Uncle John into a third party. When several lines of economic pressure, labour-costs, transportation, marketing-conditions, and half a dozen more, all converge

on him at once and bear down on him so hard that the pain in his back makes him forget his personal loyalties and supplants them with a sense of intolerable uneasiness and peril—then the third party may have its way with him. Then when Zack Minkler drops by for a little chat about politics, he may say, "No, Zack, me'n you's been friends for over twenty years, 'n you've done me a lot of favours, 'n I-like your way of lookin' at things, but you know damn well that I'm sellin' my stock because I can't 'ford to buy winter feed for 'em, and two-thirds of my land's lyin' idle because I can't get no help, and what I do get wants such outrageous wages I can't keep 'em, and if I ever get anything into town to market, I don't get scarcely nothin' for it. When the Democrats was in, it was the same way, and now we've got the Republicans back, it ain't no better; and while me'n you's been friends for over twenty years, and gen'lly allus seen things the same way, Zack, this time you've gotter count me out."

There is as yet, in short, no comfortable place in the society of Pike County for the political comelouter: the risk of being looked at askance, the risk of a conspicuous departure from regularity, is as yet too great. Economic pressure is pretty hard on Uncle John at this moment, we do not deny; and if privilege keeps on being as rapacious as it now is—and we do not see how it can very well help doing so—he may, before the members of the Committee of Forty-eight are long in their graves, be forced to this momentous break with his long-standing loyalties. But we think that a very brief observation would convince Mr. Pinchot that Uncle John is as yet far from that point. He is at the point of anxiety, of dissatisfaction, of complaint; but when the Ides of November approach, his ancient and inveterate personal loyalties will yet again control him: and these personal loyalties are the foundation upon which our routine politics, in all their mischievousness and all their monstrous absurdity, are erected. Yes, even the politics of Tammany Hall; examine the district-organization of Tammany, and you will find it bottomed on the same thing—personal human loyalties. Without them Tammany Hall would disintegrate in an hour. Against these, we have all along been fully convinced, a new political party can as yet do nothing; and when economic pressure shall have effectively undermined them, no new party will be needed, for any and all political organization, as we now know it, will then probably have disappeared forever.

GO ABROAD, CARISSIMO!

To be a writer in America is a complicated undertaking. With how many unnecessary fears we permit ourselves to be disturbed! The novice, the aspirant in our art or letters, even the master, can not cut the umbilical cord of his Americanism and go to live in Europe without searchings of the heart. He might better follow the example of those who are born in Europe. "Go abroad, carissimo!" wrote Ibsen to Björnson. "Both because distance gives a wider range of vision, and because much more value is set upon the man who is out of sight." There is the wisdom of the serpent and the innocence of the dove, the artist's whole equipment. Ibsen, we are told, gave the same advice to all those of his countrymen and countrywomen in the development of whose minds and characters he took a special interest.

It is the plainest common sense. Yet the American writer can hardly accept it without twinges of con-

science. One can understand this. America, like every newly-settled country, has been jealous of its own: its material development required for many years the solicitude of every citizen. That is why, in America, expatriation has been a breach of the tribal law. And that is why all but the strongest Americans who leave their country are constrained to feel themselves deserters. Let them set their minds at rest. We live in a new epoch; the time has come to perceive that through the self-fulfillment of its constituent individuals alone a nation can become great. It is by change and growth that society advances, and change comes through the criticism of those who are endowed with insight and with candour. Does it matter in what corner of the planet they live, these enlightened ones, so long as they find themselves and their power? A nation can only begin to believe in its own honour when it has ceased to imagine that the honour of its children can be compromised by a geographical accident.

Every advance comes through these breaches of the tribal law. In 1847, Emerson received from a peripatetic friend a letter containing these prim lines: "Considering with much pity our four stout boys, who have no playroom within doors and import shocking bad manners from the street, we gravely ponder whether it wouldn't be better to go abroad for a few years with them, allowing them to absorb French and German and get such a sensuous education as they can not get here." The "sensuous education" is the immortal point of these otherwise mortal words, for two of the four stout boys were William and Henry James. Nothing could have been more heretical than such a letter from the point of view of a pioneer democracy: one asks oneself what even Emerson must have thought when he read it. But could any heresy have been a greater public service? It was not because Henry James, having gone to Europe, continued to live in Europe that we lost him, if lose him we did: if we lost him it was because, thanks to a pioneer strain which he never transcended, he failed to attain a fullness of growth that would have been his, not if he had lived in America, but if he had been capable himself of a greater freedom. For Henry James was not less the pioneer than William James, he was more so: he was consumed all his life with the typical pioneer passion for prestige and gentility. But what had Europe to do with this? As for William James, it was Europe that made him, if not the American he was, at least the maker of America, because it made him the man. It was the having had that sensuous education which America could not give him that broadened his horizon so far beyond the horizons of the other American philosophers of his day, that made him not the American of his epoch but the American of all time.

That the choice spirit should, by whatever means, attain his fullest development is, in short, the essential matter: everything else, even, or rather especially, from the point of view of patriotism, is of secondary importance. For the more we develop the more we become ourselves, and the more we become of our race. Liberal societies have always recognized this. Ibsen passed twenty-seven years outside of Norway, and during all this time he maintained an attitude of uncompromising hostility toward the existing order in his own country; yet so clearly did his countrymen perceive that in doing so he was fighting for the great causes of humanity (and was thus, in Norwegian eyes, the more Norwegian) that he received, until he was able to dispense with it, a pension from the state, the

state which he reviled. That pension, we are told, was unanimously voted by the "pocket-edition souls" from whom he expected no comprehension, but who knew, in their littleness, that the great Ibsen existed for one end only—to make them great as well. And it was his exile that made these labours possible. "A poet belongs by nature," he said, "to the race of the long-sighted. Never have I seen home, and the living life of home, so distinctly, so circumstantially, and so closely as from a distance and in absence." Is it because we Americans are too little even to desire to become great, too fearful of public opinion even to wish to be free, that we stigmatize the irreconcilables, the malcontents, the *émigrés*, whose only object is to make straight the way before us? Let them have no doubts, these *émigrés*. Let them, by whatever means they can, escape from the living death of the village crank, the weary journalist, the benighted provincial wit, knowing that self-fulfillment is the quintessence of patriotism.

Where one lives and under what conditions is, in a word, solely a question of expedience. And expedience dictates, for the writer, for the artist, that he should follow his instinct without let or hindrance. That instinct is an inexorable law: it acts upon him with the authority of a magnet upon steel. What was it that drove Goethe to Italy? The need of certain precise experiences which Germany could not afford him and which, after they had become his, contributed to make him the greatest of the Germans. What was it that led Dante to Paris? If, in the name of Italy, Dante had forgone what only Paris could give him, could he have given Italy what he did? "When Delacroix set out for Morocco," says M. André Gide, "it was not to become an Orientalist, but rather through a realization that he was going to meet the liveliest, the most delicate and subtle harmonies, to 'become conscious' more perfectly of himself, of the colourist that he was." And by this means, by following his instinct in its exact preferences, Delacroix added, as he could have added in no other way, to the culture of France.

What have we not lost in America through this fear of instinct? Thoreau is an admirable figure: one can scarcely wish him to have been different. And yet Thoreau is a case in point. Thoreau stayed in Concord from choice and conviction, assuming that Concord contained the universe. But Concord, which was larger than Chicago is to-day, was still very small. Thoreau's was an attitude of over-determination, dictated, one can hardly doubt, by an instinct of artistic self-preservation that led him to resist the drag westward of the pioneering impulse of his time. That impulse, the artist in him knew, was one that made not for individual development but rather for the obliteration of individuality in the herd, and he, who had in himself so much of the character of the pioneer, steeled himself against it with all the force of his creative will. But this over-determination kept him the provincial that he was. He convinced himself that Concord contained the universe in order not to be drawn into experiences that were less universal than those of Concord, and the result was that he prevented himself also from being drawn into experiences that were more universal. That is why Thoreau, in spite of all that is admirable in him, seems to us to-day so starved and desiccated.

The whole effort of the creative spirit in America is, in fact, engaged at present in overcoming the inertia of the herd in the individual and the traditional stampede-impulse of the herd westward. "Go west,

young man!" said Horace Greeley; but it is only now when the tide has turned that the artistic life in America has become conscious and determined. There is something characteristic of this reversal of values in the accident by which Mr. Robert Frost, who was born in San Francisco, came into his heritage as a poet on a New England farm. To compare the poetry of Robert Frost with the poetry of Joaquin Miller is to take the measure of the myth of pioneering in the creative sphere; the pioneer has been obliged as it were to work his way painfully back to his ancestral acres in order to begin to exist as a creator. There is much that depresses one in Mr. Hamlin Garland's account of his career, but whoever has read "A Son of the Middle Border" must have been thrilled by those pages in which he describes his decision to leave the border in his youth and seek his star in the East. He took "the back trail" in defiance of the great law of the pioneers, "believing," as he says, "that I was in truth reversing all the laws of development, breasting the current of progress, stemming the tide of emigration." What became of him later is another question. But it was the East, or rather his literary novitiate in the East, his contact with a life far from universal but far more universal than the life from which he came, that enabled him to return to Dakota and re-create it in a book of tales which, whatever its limitations may be, has the character of a work of art.

For without experience of a life wider, richer, more enlightened than that of his environment, how can the young provincial, growing up in the tideless, dolorous midlands of America, discover himself or his vocation, or the glory of any vocation? "I shall always insist," says Mr. Garland of one of his uncles, "that a true musician, a superb violinist, was lost to the world in David McClintock—but as he was born on the border and always remained on the border, how could he find himself?" That is the whole tragedy of the creative spirit in a pioneer society. In her essay on Edgar Lee Masters, Miss Lowell has described what would have been a typical tragedy of this kind if Mr. Masters had been a man of less unique force. She reveals him as pursuing two careers, "constantly chafing at the one which supported him, constantly failing at the one upon which his heart was set," unable to control and direct his life and only breaking through at last in middle age with a work which, supremely impressive as it is, is in essence the story of a thwarted spirit. We find our level at last! But do we? Is "The Great Valley," is "Songs and Satires" Mr. Masters' level? No one who has read the "Spoon River Anthology" can believe it. What can we not imagine of "the border" and its victims when, thanks to having submitted for too long, however unwillingly, to its influences, a man of Mr. Masters' genius has been able to give the world so little?

It is the law of the tribe, the instinct of the herd, that anchors us: to seek experience, a more and more universal experience, is the law of the creative spirit. Western writers like to imagine that they come East only because the "market" is there: that is because the instinct of the herd still dominates them, filling them with a complacent local pride in the West. In reality, they wish to come East, just as they wish to go to Europe, and just as Eastern writers wish to go to Europe, because life in the East contains more of the universal than life in the West, and because life in Europe contains more of the universal than life in America. They are right and they know it. Let them come and go. As they find themselves, America will find itself in them.

A QUESTION OF MORALS.

THE unsuspecting foreigner in these parts might plausibly imagine that the "Make Your Own" signs increasingly displayed in our grocery shops are one side of a jovial campaign by manufacturers of cigarette paper to get smokers to roll their own. And if he picks up one of our weekly sporting papers, attracted by the girls in the one-piece bathing suits on the cover, he will, when he reads the following advertisement, be impressed at our regard for national hygiene:

STILLS! STILLS!

We can furnish you a Pure Copper Distilling Outfit, complete and ready for use that is ideal for the home, garage or laboratory. This is the most practical still ever devised and will last a life-time. Capacity, one gallon. Suitable for distillation of any kind of liquid. It has plenty of space for boiling and with a slow fire will produce distilled liquids at the rate of two quarts an hour. Auto-owners need them to distil water for batteries. Distilled water is the best safeguard against 'flu,' fevers and other diseases.

There is never any mention of alcohol as such, and the foreigner must know that this is a prohibition country where intoxicating liquors are forbidden not by any mere local-option mandate, but by the supreme law of the land. The native American may put his tongue in his cheek and look knowingly out of the corner of his left eye when he reads this summons to a sanitary life; in fact, he often emits loud guffaws. The foreigner, of course, will have to attribute such performances to our peculiar sense of humour; on the surface, these are all excessively moral and law-abiding advertisements, and he ought to be duly impressed. He usually is.

Indeed our surface-morality is the most impressive thing about us; it might be said to be our peculiar contribution to the ethical schemes of the world. Nowhere as in America and Great Britain has the technique of the formal and public adherence to virtue been so highly developed. When Mayor Gaynor tackled the problem of prostitution in New York City, with his customary frankness and gift for *le mot juste*, he coined the phrase "the outward semblance of order and decency." It was brutal but revealing. For if there is one common characteristic of Anglo-Saxon morality, wherever and whenever it appears, it is this: On no account admit anything, on no account be found out, on no account let anything become public. If Germany had not been so unsophisticated in international diplomacy, she would never have admitted that she did wrong in violating the neutrality of Belgium; the proper attitude was to have pointed out the special moral benefits which accrued to Belgium in particular and the world in general, by her action. Anglo-Saxon diplomacy has long since learned the trick of acting the rôle of a shocked saviour of civilization, whenever it is up to some exceptionally underhanded deal, and although we are comparatively new at the game, we have taken our elementary course of instruction under the Wilson regime. But at all costs, the outward semblance of order and decency must be preserved. Although, in defiance of certain Constitutional Amendments, the negro is robbed of his suffrage rights in the South, we must always be sure to speak of how the Civil War freed the slaves, and never refer to Lincoln except as the Great Emancipator. Although, in defiance of a later Constitutional Amendment, liquor is still made, sold and consumed, we must always speak of the prohibition issue as closed; or, as Mr. Bryan has phrased it, as dead as slavery. Although in no country is what is euphemistically termed sexual irregularity more widely practised than in America, we still continue to

idealize our women on the covers of our popular magazines; and although in no country is the conversation of men alone more direct and vulgar, we still subsidize organizations whose sole task is to deodorize our books and plays and moving-pictures. Indeed, cynics have said that we are too anæmic in our impulses to take natural waywardnesses simply and frankly, and we are compelled to make them publicly forbidden in order to render them secretly attractive.

But this sharp dichotomy between profession and practice, which is so characteristic of Anglo-Saxon morality and which other civilizations invariably term hypocritical, does not, in our opinion, spring from any native weakness of impulse towards the world, the flesh and the devil. On the contrary, those impulses are too often embarrassingly vigorous, and the public prohibition of any open manifestation of them is a symbol of our fear of letting ourselves go. Our morality-system has become a mechanical device for protecting us against ourselves; it is the handiwork of terror. Rather does the dichotomy between profession and practice spring from a false conception of the good life; from an elementary but persistent confusion of real ethical values. If that confusion were merely a mistake in thinking, a mere intellectual defect of our temperament, there would be no particular point in being upset about it. But unfortunately it is of very great practical importance. Increasingly our civilization is becoming hysterical, because of the inner strain which this false dualism produces; increasingly the younger generation is being poisoned in its attitude towards the joyous things of life; increasingly we are all losing the capacity for trusting ourselves. More and more our civilization is becoming not a civilization of free men but of moral cowards.

Now, the false conception which has brought about this unpleasant state of things really goes back to the doctrine of original sin, especially to Calvin. If the early 18th century romanticists erred in believing that mankind was a goddess in petticoats, the modern Puritans, who set the tone of our Anglo-Saxon morality, more certainly err in believing mankind a devil in a strait-jacket. But the problem is really neither one of taking off the petticoats or multiplying the chains on the strait-jacket; the quarrel over the question of whether man is naturally good or naturally bad, is futile and unreal. Man is naturally a bundle of different dispositions; and the ethical problem, so far as it can be said to exist at all, is how to focus the chief of those dispositions on objects which shall bring about the greatest amount of harmony among these dispositions rather than the greatest amount of disharmony. This has a suspiciously simple sound, yet as a matter of fact not even an approach to the problem can be made as long as the doctrine persists that what one really wants to do must in the nature of things be evil. That is the contemporary Anglo-Saxon official doctrine, and it is not merely false, but positively dangerous. What one wants to do can be adjudged good or bad only by virtue of the consequences; in itself, such a want or desire has only a subjective and flickering meaning; one can not even define it in ethical terms until it has been projected outward into the objective world and there set in motion. True restraint, to sum up the whole objection, comes not from the eternal No of negation and passivity, but from the eternal Yes of affirmation and activity. It springs not from the checking of desire but from the abundance of it.

This is hard doctrine to make clear, for it runs directly counter to social conventions and normal ethical

assumptions. Nietzsche, for example, struggled long to make this conception understandable; as when he said in his "Anti-Christ" that the real sin was to give out of a sense of charity, when the only truly ethical way was to give out of an abundance. Yet even he, for all the sharp vividness of his epigrams and the flashing insight of what some one has called ecstatic common-sense, never fully succeeded; and we ourselves are only vain enough to hope that we can throw out a suggestion or two. In the simple case of robbery, for instance, the man who does not pick my pocket because he is terrified at the thought of a possible prison-sentence, would hardly, even in Anglo-Saxon countries, be thought an object of high ethical approval. So far as any question of moral praise or blame goes, it will apply only to the man to whom such an action would never naturally occur, even under the stress of great want and hardship. Here we can begin to see that it is not so much a problem of struggling against our desires, as a problem of what desires we have. Yet apply the parallel further, to chastity, for instance: The chastity which is the by-product of timidity, fear of adventure, terror of disease, shrinking from social penalties—is it not precisely this kind of chastity which the sanctions of our society tend to produce in the normal young man? One could hardly deny it. Nor could one deny that chastity of this kind is morally not worth a great deal, that in fact it is somewhat despicable. The only kind that has any real ethical value is that which comes naturally as a by-product to some other more absorbing passion or interest. Here once more one can say that true restraint comes not from the checking of desire but from the abundance of it; not from any denial of life, but from some deeper sense of life's richness and fullness. However, this is a conclusion from the general course of Anglo-Saxon morals, large enough to need a treatise to itself.

A FREE COUNTRY.

ONE of Frank Norris's memorable scenes is that in "The Octopus" where the ineffectual poet Presley encounters Shelgrim, the President of the great railway that has devoured the West. Presley has lived among the ranchers, he has been the sensitive witness of their undoing, he has watched the relentless railway moving across the land like a blind monster breathing ruin. His vision of a new world of free men—what has become of it? He, the poet, the Homer, as he has dreamed, of this new world, has been turned into a frantic little desperado, a secret planter of bombs. And at last, when his devices have failed, he has sought Shelgrim himself. What is he not going to say to Shelgrim, the master, the evil and appalling brain that has directed the monster's manœuvres? Shelgrim receives him courteously; Shelgrim has even read his poems! Presley falters, Shelgrim explains. It is not his evil will, it is not his will at all, that has built the railway. "The railway," he says,—it is the motto of Norris's book—"the railway has built itself."

One finds this idea repeated in Norris's other novel, "The Pit." "The wheat cornered itself," says Curtis Jadwin. "I simply stood between two sets of circumstances. The wheat cornered me, not I the wheat." And this, perhaps, is the conviction of every man of affairs who has reached the point where, as the ironical phrase has it, he controls things. To control things is, in short, to be controlled by them. Hardly a new discovery! It is a discovery, however, that may well bewilder Americans. We who have boasted that ours is the land of the free, who have gloried

in our opportunity, to what a pass are we brought when we come to realize that opportunity, in the American sense, is another word for enslavement, that the only freedom is the freedom of the spirit?

We have been brought to this pass; we have discovered that in the land of the free, freedom does not exist. There was something that perceived this in all the finer spirits of the last age. Did not Mark Twain perceive it, the author of the aphorism that in this country we have "freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practise either of them"? Did not Henry Adams perceive it, he whose first impulse, if one is not mistaken, was to call his autobiography not the Education but the Betrayal of Henry Adams? Adams, who never truly understood himself, felt simply that he had been born to play a free man's part in a world of men; and he found himself (it is the burthen of his book) in a world not of men but of mechanical forces, a world in which he could act only through the abrogation of his individuality and which left him, incapable as he was of this, no position but that of a bewildered and ironical spectator.

Things are in the saddle; Emerson was right. Who has ever considered the thought of unhorsing them? Adaptation to environment is the law of a race of slaves who are too childish, who have been in too great a measure arrested in their development, to guess what freedom means. We are a herd that depends for its existence upon protective colouration. Clergymen in America keep office-hours to show that they are as good business men as their brokers; novelists do their work in bank-buildings for the sake of a friendly fellow-feeling with those whose incomes are acquired, in the eyes of the public, by more legitimate means. Like cattle in a cyclone, they huddle together, our spiritual pastors and masters, in order to keep warm; few indeed are those who have the courage of their vocation, of their individuality. And behold the result. "Look down at that crowd on the Avenue," a famous, or rather an infamous, Englishman is said to have remarked, quite truthfully however, as he stood at his window, during the war, in a New York hotel. "Nothing but straw hats—and all exactly alike. Not a shadow of variety. They even fix a day to change the straw hats in the spring, and everyone must comply with the custom. Clothes all the same, too, as if they had come from the hand of the same tailor. Get down among them and you will find that their faces are all the same. I tell you, the American people are the most docile, the most easily led, the least individualistic people in the world."

Adaptation to environment, the subjugation of life to the means of life, of individuality to the exigencies of the herd: it is the American religion. "His remarkably clear handwriting," says the biographer of Edison, "might be described as one of his first inventions, for he originated it expressly (when he was a telegraph operator) for the purpose of taking quick reports." And certain anecdotes about Edison reveal the effects of this engrossing study of success. "When the phonograph was in its infancy," we are told, "he was complimented by a well-known scientist upon the wonder he had achieved. The inventor somewhat startled his admirer by replying: 'Yes, but it doesn't bring in any money.'" Was Edison in need of money, that he was obliged to test the validity of his inventions by a commercial standard? No, but his self-respect depended upon his ability to command the respect of his commercial associates. Later, so com-

pletely had the thinker in him submerged itself in the mechanic that he wrote indignantly to the press in reply to some accusation that he was engaged in scientific experiments: "I have never made it a practice to work on any line not purely practical and useful." Thus it is that genius in America has enslaved itself to things. Those "mystics of industry" foretold by Saint-Simon and Carlyle, how they have betrayed themselves and us! Civilization is like an electric battery that has to be constantly recharged with new discoveries, new forces, new ideas. These inventors of ours, these organizers—what have they added to the principal of culture? They have simply made spectacular use of the interest; and that way bankruptcy lies. They have discovered nothing, they have merely applied the discoveries of others. Slaves themselves, they have only the further enslaved the rest of us.

For half a century in America, in short, man has been an effect, not a cause. In no sphere of activity has he imposed himself upon life. The American's desire is to swim as fast as the current: that is the "strenuous life." So long as he maintains his speed, he does not perceive that the current is pushing him. Things are going forward and he is going with them; feeling no resistance, he deludes himself into thinking that he is free. It is this that explains why, after imagining for so long that we were the leaders of progress, we have suddenly awakened to the discovery that in the essentials of life, Europe has far outstripped us. For in Europe man has not followed the current; he has breasted it, he has remained the master of things. He has not adapted himself to the environment: he insists that the environment must adapt itself to him. The Irish movement, the Russian movement, the movement of British labour—all those phenomena that reveal in our day, in one way or another, a will to grow, a will to attempt, a will to be free: what are they but the expressions of man imposing himself upon the accomplished fact? And one can trace them in every case back to their source in the wills of individuals. The world is not, as Mark Twain thought, a chaos of mechanical forces; it is not even, as Henry Adams thought, a cosmos of mechanical forces: it is a purposeful enterprise, however few the spirits may be who are conscious of that purpose. And it is the duty of those few to impose their conceptions upon life and by so doing awaken the many. This "mass fatalism" of ours in America, of which James Bryce warned us years ago, what is it but the result of a universal abdication of the spirit in the presence of matter? People used to talk of trying to "get gentlemen into politics"; the gentlemen were not to be found. What is a gentleman but a man with a free mind? Our gentlemen were not free; they were too busy making money; consequently, they were not gentlemen; and consequently also our democracy has gone by the board.

Alas, for a free country that knows not freedom! To control things, to possess things, is to be controlled and possessed by them; we understand it at last. And it is this that explains the instinctive repugnance of the younger generation to the life of business, of exploitation, of expansion. What examples they have placed before us, those grim old magnates of the last age who deluded themselves into imagining that they were free because nothing prevented them from becoming millionaires! It is a very different freedom that we desire now. "We have lost," said William James, "the power even of imagining what the ancient

idealization of poverty could have meant; the liberation from material attachments, the unbribed soul, the manlier indifference, the paying our way by what we are and not by what we have, the right to fling away our life at any moment irresponsibly." We have lost it. But we are, one conceives, on the point of discovering it again.

MOVING INCIDENTS.

"Oh, it was gorgeous!" cried Molly as she rushed into my study throwing her coat on a chair, her hat on the couch, and her gloves—at least the one she had not dropped on the stairs—right on to my manuscript. "It was gorgeous. I still have the cold shivers running up and down my back." "Perhaps, my dear," I said, "you'd better take a dose of aspirin."

"Aspirin, Father! Why I haven't taken cold, I've been to the movies."

"In that case, my dear, I'm afraid there is nothing you can take. Just go ahead and get it out of your system—I believe that is the proper expression. What was it all about?"—for I knew that Molly had to tell somebody about it.

"It was Helen Mazda in the 'Social Saurian'—what is a saurian, Dad?"

"A saurian, Molly, is a snake from the head to the shoulders, and a lizard from the shoulders to the tip of the tail."

"That's exactly the way Helen looked," cried Molly. "Her head was like a snake's, her eyes were just long narrow slits, and she hissed when she talked—at least, I'm sure she must have hissed, though, of course, being in the movies we couldn't hear her. She just looked hissy."

"She must have been very handsome," I began—but Molly wouldn't let me go on. Fifty years ago my father would occasionally venture to interrupt my remarks; nowadays—but this time of course it was my fault, for had I not told Molly to get it out of her system?

"And her neck was long and—and sinewy," Molly went on, obviously dissatisfied with the word she had chosen.

"May I suggest syncopated as a better word, my dear?"

"Syn—! Of course I meant sinuous, Father,—and it seemed to twist and quiver, her neck did, just like a snake out of her scarlet silk dress."

"Scarlet! Oh, I see; Helen of the movies makes you see red, does she? And the scarlet dress was cut low in the back, I suppose; indeed I venture to say, my dear, that the serpent part of your saurian extended at least to the waist-line."

Molly laughed. "Of course it did, Father, or she wouldn't have been a Social Saurian. When she stabbed the prince it was just like a cobra darting her fang into her prey."

I interrupted:

"A child sat in a movie tent
To elevate her mind.
She saw a lady stab a gent
And went away refined."

"I suppose," continued Molly loftily, "that's one of those Moral Songs of old Doctor Watts that you are so fond of quoting. Anyhow, it was thrilling."

"Dr. Watts!" I mused. "Very likely, my dear. I've really forgotten just where I read those verses. What a pity Pomona of Rudder Grange isn't still alive. How she would have thrilled at the movies. Thrills, thrills, thrills! People nowadays seem to want nothing else. Even in their food they invent such salads as that which your mother gave me to-day; canned pineapple, pickled beets, Roquefort cheese and mayonnaise. As you said just now, the cold shivers are still running up and down my back. But to return to our movies. I read somewhere the other day that a philosopher had said lately that: 'The Photo-play is a co-ordinate art in which space, time and causality are eliminated, and imagination and other forms of'—he says 'mind,' but I rather think he means insanity—'are introduced.' Think of that now, Molly my dear, you eliminate 'space, time and causality' and you still have something left—the movies."

"Why not?" said Molly. "You know what wonderful machines are invented nowadays, and how many thousand times a second the camera-shutter has to click. The trouble with you, Father, is that you are prejudiced and won't ever go to see the movies; and whenever I bring up the subject you start talking about Burbage and Booth and Nell Gwynne

and Moody and Sankey, and all those other stuffy old actors you saw when you were young."

"Yes, my dear," I replied humbly, "but you might remember it is one of the privileges of age. I confess I do like to talk about all those old actors I saw when I was young. I sometimes find myself wondering what this present generation will have to think and talk about as a solace to its old age? However, my dear, you are quite wrong about my never having been to the movies. I have had that wonderful experience four times, though there were extenuating circumstances on two of those occasions—and the last time I saw a real thriller. It was this same Helen Mazda of yours. I remember she stabbed—well, I forget his name, but I believe he is the highest salaried man there has ever been in the history of the world. It took him at least five minutes to die and they paid him a million dollars a minute." I watched Molly carefully as I said this but she didn't bat an eyelid. One can believe anything about movie salaries. So I continued. "Well, Helen stabbed him in the diaphragm, and then suddenly began to feel some compunction for her act, at least so I judged, because she threw herself upon the corpse, and then began to throw social-saurian fits until two children in the audience became hysterical. Then she did a fade-away and I thought all was over; but before I could get my breath, back she comes upon the screen, only her face this time, five times as large as life and ten times as unnatural. It stayed there for—I was going to say a week; but I suppose it was only five minutes—and grinned and grimaced and mouthed at me out of its frame, until I stood up in my seat and cried out in my agony, 'For God's sake bite me, and get done with it!' Then an usher and a vaudeville act came along to put me out of my misery."

"Father," began Molly solemnly, "do you mean to say—" "No, my dear, I don't. But if you will insist upon eliminating time, space and causality, how can I help it. But don't misunderstand me, I don't object to the movies—at least, I wouldn't object if people wouldn't go to see them—indeed I think they are useful. When I read in the papers something about the Gaikwar of Baroda, and find myself wondering whether it's a species of extinct animal or an Asiatic river, I am glad when the movies show me the gentleman himself riding on an elephant, and behaving like a very estimable person. But these pictures are not the real movies. I notice that the audience always begins to leave as soon as the Gaikwar comes on, people seem to care only for the film which 'allows us to be everywhere at the same time' which 'overcomes the heaviness of the outer world and builds up the inner' by vivifying the scare-heads and comic supplements of yellow journalism. Imagine, my dear, a Sunday newspaper of nothing but headlines, and every headline a picture."

Molly refused, tacitly, to imagine it. But with her usual logic she remarked, "They really do have animated cartoons in the movies, Dad, and I've read that some great educator has said that the movies are a wonderful agent for the education of the masses."

I sighed. "Molly, they are so busy educating the masses that the educated man is becoming extinct. Some other educator I think has said that the human race progresses in an upward mounting spiral. It seems to me that at times the high gods, in derision, turn our spiral upside down, and that humanity aspires downward back towards the moral status of the anthropoid apes and the mental development of the tailed monkeys."

"Father," said Molly with more than her usual solemnity, "Promise me one thing; never eat any more of that salad."

"I promise, my dear," I replied, "if you will explain the matter to your mother."

L. MAGRUDER PASSANO.

THE BURNING QUESTION.

THE fuel famine of 1917-18 was expected by those who understood economic and industrial relations. Those who were called to master national production were forewarned by engineers; moreover, it was not in their interests to hinder production, to delay shipments, to jeopardize our army or to spread misery at home. The Fuel Administrator summarized the situation that developed, all this notwithstanding, in a few words: "War munitions, food, manufactured articles of every description lie at our Atlantic ports in tens of thousands of tons, while literally hundreds of ships, waiting loaded with goods for our men and the

Allies, can not take the seas because their bunkers are empty of coal."

To crown it all the industries had to stop producing goods for ten days and five "Garfield Mondays" besides. The old industrial and economic system had plainly demonstrated its incompetency to carry out production and distribution for use.

That was during the war. Since then we have learned by experience the truth of the statement that "war is hell"; now we are rushing headlong to a bitter realization of the truth of the second part of that statement: "but after war comes reconstruction as after death the Day of Judgment."

That the day of Last Judgment is at hand, signs are many and unmistakable. In the words of our foremost engineer and leader of constructive thought, our economic life is based on the theory that "if we can harvest more dollars by producing fewer goods, we produced fewer goods." Thus the production of woolen goods has dropped to a fraction of normal, at once sending the price of finished goods upwards and the cost of raw wool downwards; the production of silk and many other commodities render similar examples, but the production of coal—of this fundamental energy-producing material without which no industry or civilized life itself is conceivable—offers a particularly illustrative example.

Statistics of the U. S. Geological Survey tell us that the production of bituminous coal this year is below that of 1917 and 1918; nearly half of the full-time output is not being produced and yet labour shortage or the effect of strikes is not appreciably larger than in 1918-19 when these two factors caused the loss of less than three per cent of time. The present difficulty is ascribed to transportation-disability arising since the railroads were returned to their private owners, causing about forty per cent loss of production, while during 1918-19, with all the sticks thrown into the wheels of the Government's Railway Administration, only about four per cent of production was lost due to transportation.

The law of supply and demand to which we, all too soon, bade good-bye, asserts itself in figures published recently by the National Bank of Commerce in New York:

Bituminous R/M	1920				
	f.o.b. mine	Jan.-Mar.	April	May	June
Fairmount, W. Va..	\$2.80	4.25	6.50	9.50	gr. ton
Pittsburgh Dist.	2.35	4.25	5.25	8.50	net ton

That the increase of wages to miners by twenty-nine per cent does not justify the 240-260% increase in price is obvious.

The question thus arises, is the transportation-disability a godsend or a curse? It all depends of course on which side of the fence one finds oneself. If by restricting the output by forty per cent the coal producer is enabled to increase the price 250%, it is a matter of elementary arithmetic to figure out the benefits in the mass of profit; if by restricting the output of coal we reduce proportionately the production of power (two-thirds of coal is used for power generation and transportation) we inevitably curtail the production and distribution of all goods and commodities; we increase consequently the dearth of commodities, we invite suffering in our homes next winter; we proselytize for bolshevism and we shut the door to our cherished hopes of international commerce, unless we are willing to export raw coal and crude iron and import it back in the shape of dyes,

chemicals, watch-springs, instruments of precision, etc., at a hundred times the original price.

The interests of the country are thus at variance with those of a few narrow-visioned coal-producers. But where stand the railways in this matter? Coal constitutes one-third of all freight, and at that, one of the most profitable kinds of freight. The loss of thirteen per cent of this business is a serious item, and it is estimated that close to \$700,000,000 is needed by all the railways to provide enough rolling stock properly to handle this coal. There is yet another side to this question. So far as the general benefit of the country is concerned, the less coal is moved on the railways the better, for the less there is of it, the more traffic congestion is relieved, the railways are better able to move other commodities, over-equipment and over-capitalization are reduced and the cost of power is decreased.

It is profitable for the railways to bring copper ore from Arizona mines to New Jersey refineries, from there carry it to Connecticut brass works, then move the brass fixtures to factories in the Middle West and finally ship automobiles or machinery to the coasts. It is likewise profitable to haul, with coal, up to twenty per cent by weight of dirt, slate and water; it may be "good business" to use West Virginia coal in Maine, but what of public welfare in all this?

There is neither use nor excuse for bringing coal in its unprepared, raw state to the place where heat or power is needed. This antiquated, barbarous practice has not a vestige of justification in the present state of technique. Coal manufactured at the mouth of the mine, yields several semi-finished products, the combined value of which is nearly twenty times greater than that of raw coal. A ton of coal can thus be split into: bensol, to relieve the shortage of petroleum and gasoline; ammonium sulphate to fertilize the soil, increase the crops and extract ammonia which is needed for refrigeration; solvents, oil and coal-tar form the basis of specialized industries that yield nearly one thousand diversified articles of which to mention the best known: alizarine, dyes, toluol (T. N. T.), aspirin, acetanilide (Bromo-Seltzer), pyrogallol (photo developer), etc. The residue of this splitting process is partly fuel gas (5000 cubic feet or more) and smokeless, dustless, odourless, non-clinkering coal which is superior to anthracite (up to 1500 lbs.)

To relieve the exhaustion of natural gas in Ohio, pipes are now conveying gas from West Virginia to Cleveland, Ohio, yet this coal is admirably suited to produce gas for domestic and industrial purposes besides rendering other multiple products available. Smoke abatement in Chicago is as much a source of loss to the city as the smoke itself, yet the use of manufactured coal would make smoky chimneys practically impossible. But there is nowadays no necessity to transport even those 1500 lbs. of smokeless fuel obtained from every ton of raw coal, for the bulk of it may be converted into electricity in the proximity of the coal fields, and by a net-work of electric transmission-lines the power itself may be delivered to its ultimate consumer.

Again, the railways estimate that something like \$6,-000,000,000 will be used to put them abreast of present-day requirements. Yet the railways themselves use nearly twenty per cent of all the coal produced. How much less would suffice for the rehabilitation of the railways if they were to be electrified, getting their motive power not in bulk of raw coal, involving coal-

yards, coal-cars and five per cent efficient steam locomotives, but in the form of electric current fed from the coal-fields as well as from hydro-electric plants? Belgium adopted this electrification plan to reconstruct their war-worn railroads; Italy is well advanced in this direction, having no coal of its own. We in America, intoxicated by our wealth in natural resources, still think in terms of turning our wastefulness into profit.

While the course of development indicated above is inevitable and inescapable it can not be immediate; the task is too enormous for private initiative hampered by competition, by credit conditions and by a legislature fearing a new financial octopus of unprecedented spread and magnitude, embracing all the fundamentals of our economic life—fuel, power and transportation.

It is almost pathetic to observe that the gas companies are clamouring for and are obtaining higher rates for their gas, while the net earnings of electric utilities are increasing so rapidly that the reduction of rates is not only ordered, as in Washington, D. C., but is even voluntarily reduced as in Boston.

The public is being penalized through the increase in the price of gas, for tolerating the mismanagement and antiquated technique of gas production. Gas, being an ideal fuel for domestic and industrial purposes, is unable as yet under the present incompetent, narrow-visioned management, to displace the use of raw coal, steam boilers and engines and even of electricity, whereas, if produced by a process which would permit the recovery of those by-products which are even more valuable than gas itself, it easily could replace over twenty per cent of our present coal consumption, thus rendering at once the utilization of fuel vastly more efficient. Moreover, when one remembers that it is not only possible but actually profitable to deliver natural gas and crude oil in pipe lines a thousand miles long, one sees with bewilderment the gas plants and huge gas holders standing in the midst of our crowded cities, hundreds of miles away from our coal-fields, and one fails to grasp the full significance of this tremendous social waste, involving as it does the transportation of coal, a high rent on land, the high cost of gas, etc.

In the meantime our resources of petroleum are limited, and possibly they will not last another two score years; with the demand for gasoline as motor-fuel reaching six billion gallons a year we can not even begin to think of replacing gasoline by alcohol, so long as the demand for food stuffs continues to grow; and even if we were to turn all the grain and potatoes we now export to alcohol-making, and cultivate dastines on every bit of arable land, we could not even then supply more than twenty per cent of the present demand for motor fuel.

And yet, in the face of all this—and this is perhaps the most startling statement—we need no new inventions, we need not stretch our imaginations, we need no great genius to solve this "burning question." The engineers and technicians know well enough what to do and how to do it. They have developed the processes, they have devised the mechanism. Neither is there any novelty in their discoveries—they have been known and perfected for years.

The solution is simple, available and obvious but so long as the technicians can do no more than do the bidding of their masters—well, what are you going to do about it, citizens of the United States?

WALTER N. POLAKOV.

THE COUNTESS'S CONSTITUENCY.

IN the sputtering flare of the arc-lamp in front of Dublin's Liberty Hall stood squads of boys and girls. Some of the boys wore short, green coats with brass buttons but many were coatless; some had on knickers and others shabby, long trousers. On the opposite side of the street were the girls, some in green tweed suits, and others in their working clothes. These were companies of the Citizens' Army recruited by the Irish Labour party, and they had assembled in honour of the return of the Countess Markewicz from jail. Near-by on the railway bridge crossing the Liffey tin-hatted and bayonet-carrying British soldiers were silhouetted against the moonlit sky. Up to these military, floated the last oath of "The Red Flag."

With heads uncovered swear we all.
To bear it onward till we fall.
Come dungeon dark or gallows grim,
This song shall be our parting hymn.

Presently, clattering over the bridge, came a horse-dragged brake, and at once the vast crowd surged and shouted "Up the Countess!"

To strangers the Countess may be introduced briefly thus: she is the daughter of the Gore-Booth family which owned its land in Sligo long before America was discovered; as a girl she would ride her galloping horse like mad along the rocky western coast; then she became a three-feathered débutante bowing in the vice-regal presence at Dublin castle; later she painted pictures in Paris and married her handsome Pole. One fine day some one put an Irish history in her hands, and in a sudden, whole-hearted conversion to the cause of the people, the Countess turned to aid the Irish labour-organizers. She drilled boy scouts for the Citizens' Army. She fed starving strikers during the labour-troubles of 1913 with sheep sent daily from her Sligo estate. She became a valued member in the councils of both Sinn Féin and the Irish Labour party. In the rebellion of 1916 she fought under Michael Mallin of the Citizens' Army. She was hardly out of jail for her part in the rebellion when she was clapped in again for alleged complicity in the never-to-be-proved German plot; and when she was in jail she was elected the first woman member of Parliament. Now in an upper room in Liberty Hall, pale from her long imprisonment, her small, round, steel-rimmed glasses dropping away from her blue eyes, and her curly hair wisping out from under her black felt hat, the Countess greeted the men and women who had come to welcome her. Below, the crowd clamoured insistently for her appearance at the window.

"Fellow-rebels!" she began as she leaned out over the street cobbled with faces, "it's good to come out of jail to this. It is good to come out again to work for a republic. Let's all join hands to make the new republic a worker's republic. A change of flags is not enough."

Two oil flares with orange flames throwing off red sparks on to the crowd, were fastened to the brake below. This was the brake that was to carry "Madame" on her triumphal tour of the city. Into it I climbed with the Countess, the plump little Mrs. James Connolly, the magisterial Countess Plunkett, Commandant O'Neill of the Citizens' Army, Sean Milroy who escaped with de Valera from Lincoln jail, and two or three others. Rows of constables were backed against the walls at regular intervals. I asked Sean Milroy if he were not afraid he would be retaken, and he responded comfortably that the peelers

would never attempt to take a political prisoner out of a crowd like that. As we neared the poverty-smelling Coome district the Countess remarked that that was her constituency. "What have you planned for your constituency?" she demanded of Sean Milroy, himself a member of Parliament, "I'm going to have a soviet."

A soviet? Why not? Seven-eighths of the Irish people are in the working-class; and since it is possible to understand what the workers are up against only by living as they live, I decided to go dressed as a working-woman and live in the Coome.

At the Government's employment-bureau for women the first thing I discovered was that 50,000 Irish boys and girls are annually sent to work in the English harvest-fields.

"But I don't want to leave home," I heard a girl say as we stood in *queues* at the chicken-wire hatch in the big, bare room. Her voice trembled with the uncertainty of one who knew she could not dictate.

"Then you've got to be a servant," said the very direct young woman official inside the hatch. "There's nothing left in Ireland but domestic jobs."

"Isn't there something I could do in Belfast?"

"Linen-mills are on part time now—no chance. There's only one place for good jobs now; that's across the Channel."

The girl shook her head, and together we splashed into the broken-bricked alley that was sloppy with melting sleet. "Maybe she doesn't know everything," she said, fingering a religious medal that shone beneath her brown muffler. "Maybe some one's dropped out. Let's say a prayer."

Through the cutting sleet we bent our way to Dublin's largest factory—a plant where 1000 girls are employed at what are the best woman's wages in Dublin, \$4.50 to \$10 a week. "You gotta be pretty brassy to ask for a job here," said the little girl. "Everybody wants to work here. But you can't get anything unless you're brassy, can you?"

We entered a big-windowed, red-bricked room, and in response to our timid application, a black-clad woman shook her head wearily. Out we went into the street again, and were blown down a puddly straw-strewn lane to another factory. On the door was scrawled: "No Hands Wanted!" But in the courage of companionship we mounted the narrow wooden stairs to a box-littered room where aproned girls were nailing candy-containers together. "Well, can't you read?" was all the manager said to us.

Up in another loft-like saw-dusty room where girls were stuffing dolls and daubing red paint on china cheeks, an excited manager declared he would soon be losing his own job. The new woman's trades-union league wanted him to pay more than one dollar a week to his girls. He would show the union his books and ask them whether it wasn't better to have any job than none at all?

Down the wet streets we walked into a grubby little tea-shop for a six-penny pot of tea between us, and out of my pocket I pulled an official list of well-paying, imagination-stirring jobs in England from toy-making at \$8.25 a week to glass-blowing at \$20. On the face of my companion was a look of worried indecision as she told me that she would meet me at the employment-bureau the next morning.

That night along Gloucester street, with its Georgian mansions built before the Union—great, flat-faced, up-rising structures behind whose verdigrised knockers and broken doors comes the murmur of tenements

—I walked till I came to a much-polished brass plate lettered "St. Anthony's Working Girls' Home."

"Why don't you go to England?" was the first question the matron put to me when I told her that I was looking for a job. "All the girls are going."

In the stone-flagged cellar the girls were cooking their individual dinners at a stove deep set in the stone wall. A big, curly-haired girl was holding bread on a fork above the red coals. "Last time I got lonesome over there," she told me. "But the best parlour-maid here gets \$60 a year, and over at Basingstoke in England I have a job waiting for me at \$150 a year." Then she added meditatively, "if you want to live nowadays, I suppose you gotta be lonesome."

Next morning in the employment-bureau I met my friend of the day before. She said a little dully: "Well, I took it—shirt-making—Edinburgh."

Of course instead of migrating, a girl may marry. But in most cases her husband can not make enough to support a family. To keep an average family just going, costs \$370 a year, on food alone, in Ireland to-day. Some farm-hands get only \$100 a year. The average unskilled worker receives \$260 a year. An unorganized unskilled worker obtains \$367, and an organized skilled worker, \$539. Therefore, when a girl marries, she has not only to bear children but to go out to work besides.

I understood the fate of the mothers of Dublin better after I had spent a few nights in a typical one-room home in the dockers' quarters near the Liffey. I lodged with the widow Hannan. She is a strong black-haired young woman whose husband was killed fighting under James Connolly in the rebellion of 1916. Our room was the first-floor front. With the widow lay her three children and in the cot, catty-corner from her bed, I was bunked. On my first morning just when the night air was thinning to grey there came a shattering rap on the window-pane. One of the widow's children, already a factory-worker, clambered over the others and ripped down the rain coat that served as a window-curtain during the night. Against the window was hunched a stooping figure of a woman. My landlady beckoned her to the door. "God save all here," said the neighbour entering. "Himself's had no work for four days. Keep the young ones out of the grate for me, Mary Hannan, I've got to go out washing."

"This is my sister-in-law," said Mrs. Hannan by way of introduction. "She has a husband and seven children to support. During the war they could get along with her going out just once in a while. Now it's all the time." Then to her sister-in-law: "I've a wash myself to-day." The big shoes that must once have belonged to her man, hit the floor loosely as the visitor walked slowly out.

That evening I heard the murmur of revolution. With the shawled mothers who line the lane on evenings when the weather is fine, I stood between the widow Hannan and a twenty-year old girl who held her tiny blind baby in her arms. Across the narrow street, barefoot children, some with rags of burlap tied about their shoulders, slapped their feet as they jigged or jumped at hopscotch. Behind them in typical Dublin decay, rose the stables of an anciently prosperous shipping-concern. Suddenly the girl-mother spoke. "Why there's himself coming back, Mary. See him turning up from the timber on the quay. There's sorrow in his eyes this morning, like the submarine-times, when he came to tell me no boat docked. I'll have to get work myself, baby or no

baby, for he's not given me a farthing for a fortnight."

A big fair-haired boy was homing toward the door. Without meeting the girl's eyes he stepped into the doorway. When he slouched out again his hand dropped from his hip-pocket.

"It's to drill he's going," was all the young mother said as she snugged her shawl in more tightly about her baby. A lamp-lighter streaked yellow flame into the square lamp hanging from the stone shell opposite. Then, grimly, came the whisper of the widow of the rebellion close to my ear: "Oh, we'll have enough in our army this time."

Down there in the Coome I found that night-refuges are the last stage in the journey to the poor-house. As I sat one evening with a tableful of charwomen and general-housework girls, I read aloud advertisements from a Dublin paper. One offered a job for a general servant with wages at \$50 a year. The other ran: "Wanted: a strong, humble, general-housework girl to live out. \$1.25 a week." I put the choice up to the table.

"If you haven't anybody of your own to live with," advised a husky-voiced girl as she warmed her fingers about her mug of tea, "you should take the job living in with the family. It takes \$5 a week to live by yourself."

"Whatever you get, don't let it go," said a little bird-faced woman leaning over the table towards me. Then she settled herself back impressively, keeping her little warning eyes still fixed on my face. Then she continued: "Once I gave up a place because they let me have only potatoes and onions for dinner. No, hold on to whatever you get, whatever you get." And after we had gone through the regulation night-prayers that were so long drawn out that some one moaned: "Do they want to scourge us with praying?" the old charwoman came over to me and repeated the hopeless words: "Hold on to whatever you get—whatever you get."

In the sixty-bed dormitory we turned down the mussed towelling sheets from the bolsters. "My clothes dried on me after the rain, and I do be coughing till my chest is sore," said the girl who had sat next to me at the table. "There was too many at the dispensary, I couldn't wait."

Out of a sagging pocket in her creased mackintosh she took a clothes brush, and then slipped her skirt from under her coat and brushed the muddy hem. "If I had a bit o' black for my shoes now—with your clothes I could get me a housemaid's job easy." Her muffler hid the fact that she had no shirt-waist on under her coat. Then she added encouragingly: "You'd better get a job as quick as you can. There's only one blanket on these beds and clothes run down when you use them for covers at night."

Near-by a grey-faced mother was wrapping her petticoat about the legs of a small child. I heard her babbling softly to the drowsy little one as she tucked her in the narrow bed they were both to sleep in: "No place yet. My heart do be falling out of me. But I'm not to blame for it's you that keeps me from getting it." And bending over the bed she whispered sharply: "Oh my darling, shall we die in Dublin?"

Gradually it grew dark and quiet in this vault of human misery. . . .

"Sinn Fein will get the Republic," said the Countess to me one evening as we talked together by the fire. Then, with her eyes on the burning peat she spoke again and said: "Labour will swamp Sinn Fein."

RUTH RUSSELL.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

A SOCIALIST ANSWERS.

SIRS: Two fundamental questions are raised by Mr. Pinchot in his articles in recent issues of the *Freeman*, and by your editorial comment thereon. First, if privilege—in the sense of private ownership and control of basic natural resources and of the means of transportation—were destroyed, would capital become the natural ally of labour?; and would the destruction of "privilege" while leaving "legitimate capital" in private hands, abolish poverty and industrial slavery, remove all grounds for the present "unrest," protect the rights of the individual and advance the general well being of society as a whole? Second, if the answer to these questions is in the affirmative, then is the time ripe to form a political party dedicated to these ends? Both Mr. Pinchot and the editors of the *Freeman* answer the first question affirmatively. They differ on the second.

One can have only sympathy with the human values Mr. Pinchot wishes to conserve and promote. A social order deprived of individual initiative and dominated by a tyrannical State or an officious and inefficient bureaucracy is a melancholy prospect. But it is doubtful whether the method that Mr. Pinchot proposes will serve his ends. In the first place I question whether his plan is even practicable. Mr. Pinchot dwells on the unique character of the American problem and on "our peculiar psychology and economic facts." But does he not carry his argument on this point to a quite unwarrantable extreme? While the variation in the nature and sources of the power of the Haves over the Have-nots deserves attention, it is the fundamental identity of the conflict between these groups in all nations that is the more urgent problem. Surely if any of the programmes of socialism or syndicalism mentioned by Mr. Pinchot are efficacious in Europe it is going too far to say they are totally inapplicable to American conditions. At any rate the progressive section of American labour shows little sign that it agrees with Mr. Pinchot in the necessity of finding some peculiarly American way of abolishing privilege and leaving private capital intact.

In this connexion it is instructive to note that at the recent convention of the Labour party and the Committee of Forty-eight the labour forces whose programme is one of opportunistic socialism and who act very definitely upon the theory of the class struggle, even if they do not always profess it, won a complete victory over the "Right" wing of the Committee of Forty-eight. It is even more significant that in the recent Montreal convention of the American Federation of Labour the advocates of the Plumb Plan won a handsome victory in the face of the opposition of President Gompers himself—and the Plumb Plan is much more an American form of guild socialism than it is an attempt to carry out Mr. Pinchot's plan for the overthrow of privilege. It does not of course follow that a programme is wrong because it commands little popular support, but since Mr. Pinchot bases part of his opposition to socialism on the peculiarities of American psychology, the socialist is abundantly justified in replying that his doctrine is making far more rapid headway in this country than is Mr. Pinchot's doctrine, which in its essentials has been preached from the days of Henry George until now, without winning the support of other than a comparatively small group of middle-class intellectuals.

Another objection to the practicability of the programme outlined by Mr. Pinchot is to be found in the attitude of private holders of capital. Mr. Pinchot condemns revolution and seeks instead the abolition of privilege, an achievement which he seems to think can be brought about by political action. But privilege now is part of the warp and woof of the capitalistic system. To ask the capitalist, big or little, to join in the destruction of privilege is like inviting him to face a major operation without an anæsthetic. The American middle class is sufficiently class-conscious to resist any attempt to apply the St. Louis programme of the Committee of Forty-eight as vigorously as it would resist socialism itself. From this standpoint alone Mr. Pinchot's programme is at least as impossible as the "impossible revolution" of the socialist, or the impossible regulation of the liberal, both of which Mr. Pinchot so scornfully rejects. In short Mr. Pinchot's plan commands the support of none of these social groups who are becoming increasingly class-conscious in action if not in profession.

But in spite of all these practical difficulties if the removal of privilege would accomplish the desired end it would be the bounden duty of every thoughtful man to sup-

port the St. Louis programme. But the question arises is that programme adequate or even wholly desirable? To place the control of basic natural resources and transportation into the hands of the State will enormously increase the already vast power of that political machine, whose inordinate claims upon the lives of men rightly concern us all.

While there is a growing tendency to regard a strike against the Government as a peculiarly nefarious thing which must be forbidden at all costs, Mr. Pinchot, in the name of individualism, actually proposes the erection in a capitalistic State, of more government bureaucracies to operate the railroads, and to control all the basic natural resources of the nation. He does not even specify that these government controlled industries shall be democratically managed. It is at this price that Mr. Pinchot would purchase freedom for private capital in the restricted field of competitive industry. And yet it would seem that this appalling programme of State capitalism receives the blessing of those same editors of the *Freeman* whose own theory of the State, as I understand it, borders on anarchy! The simple minded socialist can only conclude that the ways of the simon pure "radical" are past finding out!

But this is not all. Though privilege might be abolished, profit seeking would still remain the normal motive in all business transactions. To be sure with the St. Louis programme in operation there could be no such vast fortunes as our billionaires now enjoy, but from a psychological standpoint there can be little hope of a better social order based on freedom and fellowship so long as the desire for personal gain is the chief motive in industry. It is not necessary to assume that the reward for labour must be exactly the same for every man, in order to believe that the primacy of the profit motive endangers human relations. So long as the prime incentive to industry is individual gain rather than the needs of the community, the amassing of wealth rather than the winning of honour, the desire for money rather than the satisfaction of the creative instinct, so long will machine-industry be the master rather than the servant of men. It is not Utopian to argue that men can so order their affairs that the desire for profits will no longer be their primary motive. In the natural man there are other and worthier incentives to labour, as the history of the mediæval guilds abundantly proves.

The case can be argued on economic grounds as well. Surely it is not necessary to pile up evidence to convince Mr. Pinchot that the profit-motive does not make for production for use. On the contrary, as everybody knows, it is often highly profitable to maintain a scarcity of necessary articles by some form of sabotage, and to divert potentially useful social energies into the production of luxuries. Major C. H. Douglas in his remarkable new book, "Economic Democracy" makes a still more searching criticism of the profit-system. After careful analysis he establishes the thesis that while profit

is of small and diminishing importance as compared with the delusive accounting system which accompanies it, and which acts to reduce consistently the purchasing power of effort, it is nevertheless, of prime importance as furnishing the immediate 'inducement to produce,' which is a false inducement in that it claims as 'wealth' what may just as probably be waste. . . . Further, if the interaction between production for profit and the creation of credit by the finance and banking houses is understood, it will be seen that the root of the evil accruing from the system is in the constant filching of purchasing power from the individual in favour of the financier, rather than in the mere profit itself.

That is to say the profit-motive has led to a pyramiding of credit with wholly disastrous results. Here is a formidable factor which is not even considered either in the St. Louis programme or in Mr. Pinchot's articles in the *Freeman*.

All these points may be summed up by saying that neither the *Freeman* nor Mr. Pinchot has met the socialist charge that capitalism is wrong because in its essence it is the "possession of the power to exploit the labour of the community." What is socially created must be socially controlled.

Mr. Pinchot may object that my criticism of his plan is entirely destructive. Well, I confess, I have no panacea to propose. In general I believe that the break-down of the capitalist-imperialist system is rapidly leaving us no other choice than between some form of socialism on the one hand and bloody chaos on the other. The task before us all to-day is to see to it that, as Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has said, "The socialist State must be a condition of individual liberty and not merely an authority imposing obedience."

I am aware of the weight of the criticisms which have been levelled against the theory of guild socialism, yet I believe that the guild socialists are doing the most fruitful thinking of our time with regard both to industry and the

state. Their clear discrimination between the interests of man as producer and consumer is particularly helpful. But neither guild socialism nor any other scheme that I know of offers a satisfactory solution of the problem of the relation of the individual to society. That eternal problem lies deeper than the problem of the relation of the individual to the political state. It grows more rather than less complex because of the growing interdependence of men of every race. The socialization of production through machine-industry requires socialization of control. And for purposes of social control the State will for a long time play a large part. One can not honestly indulge oneself any longer in the simple faith that the best government is that which governs least. The most one can hope to do is to help destroy the metaphysical doctrine of sovereignty, and to make it clear that the State is only one form of human association, and a form which must be the servant of men and not their master. Under any form of society it will not be easy to assert the right of the individual "to know, to utter and to argue freely according to conscience." The attainment of freedom will remain a conscious achievement. Its social corollary must be fellowship and both freedom and fellowship will be more easily achieved when a system is abolished which is deliberately based on the exploitation of the many by the few.

To abolish political action is even more impossible than to abolish the state. Even under Kropotkin's communistic anarchy there would still be a need for some organization of give and take, and the erection of some kind of machinery for the adjustment of conflicting ideals and interests. This in the broadest sense of the term is political action. The trouble with political action to-day is that the state, claiming metaphysical sanction, rests on coercion rather than on fellowship, and that our machinery for obtaining representation is ill adapted to develop or to reflect the intelligent opinion of the people on the real problems of social and economic life. In fact it exists as the tool by which the oligarchy of capitalism and landlordism exercises control. This situation may—or may not—justify a group in temporarily abandoning any attempt to compete with existing political parties in their use of political machinery. But the methods of violent revolution, of direct action or of education, are avowedly only a means to establish a condition in which political action can be used. Apparently the *Freeman's* difference with Mr. Pinchot concerns only the timeliness of the formation of a third party and an appeal to political action. But occasionally the *Freeman's* editors seem to go beyond even the I. W. W. in their disbelief in political action. While I heartily agree with them "that when the economic organization wants anything enough to insist on having it, nothing else really matters," I am yet puzzled by their complacent acceptance of the examples of economic action they cite. The international labour boycott of the White terror in Hungary is for instance considered by the editors of the *Freeman* to be a hopeful sign, so too is British Labour's effective opposition to the Allied campaign against Soviet Russia; yet surely timely political action by labour would have saved all these months of waste, confusion and tragic suffering.

And there is another danger. The economic organization is not and never will be completely unified. It is in fact not one organization but several. One economic organization wants one thing and one another. If each organization is to use direct action to get its will the social outlook is black enough. These are factors which modern socialists, especially those of the Guild school do not ignore, but so far the *Freeman* has been silent upon them. Indeed it is not a little amusing to find proceeding out of the same editorial mouth blessings for the economic action of class-conscious labour organizations, and cursings for the class-struggle theory on which these organizations operate. Certain it is that the economic direct-actionists who are so frequently praised by the *Freeman* are very far from accepting its editors' views on "privilege," "individualism" or the "class-struggle." Doubtless there may be an explanation for this seeming paradox. But in the meantime one at least of the *Freeman's* admiring readers finds the programme of American socialism, by comparison, both adequate and satisfying. I am, etc.,
New York, N. Y.

NORMAN THOMAS.

SELF-DETERMINATION IN PRECEPT AND PRACTICE.

SIRS: I have read Stoddard's book, "The Rising Tide of Colour." I put it down, saying to myself that the author has succeeded in portraying the very great if not imminent danger, but has he sufficiently stressed the only relief?

In 1896 I thought that Bryan was right in the statement of most of his complaints; but it appeared to me that in no instance did he suggest a proper remedy.

In my opinion there is only one salvation for the white race, and that is to have it abandon self-assumption and hypocrisy, and recognize the right of other races to work out their own salvation. In other words, the white races appear to be in actual danger, unless they can find and adopt an intelligent method for setting free those peoples whom they have so long held in subjection. This prating about its being good for the other man, is tiresome. We have to deal, not with the white man's burden, but with the black man's burden.

Now for my excuse for this observation. This morning I picked up your *Freeman*, and find the article on Gorky's movement. I am still wondering whether it can be true. If it is, it appears to indicate that there really is one people that has asserted the right of self-determination as a result of this war; and that is the Russian people. If such a movement is possible in the midst of the conditions that we have had described to us, we must have been the victims of deception without end. It is all like a revelation to me; and we, who have been sitting in judgment upon other peoples, deceived by the assumption that the enjoyment of immediate comfort signifies a right to its perpetuation, should reflect. We should, as some author said not long ago, learn to distinguish between idealism and the idealization of ourselves. I am, etc.

St. Louis, Mo.

CHARLES NAGEL.

BEWARE! THE FOREIGNER.

SIRS: I am writing this letter in a reading-room of one of Uncle Sam's well-known Army Hospitals. The room is filled with convalescent soldiers—some on wheel-chairs, spinal cases these, some on crutches minus a leg or two, some with horribly mutilated faces, while a good many are "sporting" with canes, myself included. All these, are living relics of the "Great Victory" and the World War.

The Biblical Babel seems to have its main office here. Slovak and Canadian, Bohemian and Filipino, Pole and Jew, Italian and Russian, white Americans from the North and dark Americans from the South—all are represented around me as I write. I turn my eyes to the long table littered with numerous periodicals, and this is what I see:—Five soldiers, hyphenless Americans all, approach the table and begin to search for something to read. One goes away with a popular weekly published by the American Legion; the second and third pick up newspapers to settle an argument about yesterday's ball game; the fourth is already busy with a popular all-fiction magazine; while I hear the fifth asking for the *Practical Physician*.

I turn my eyes to the right and glance at my neighbour—a young Italian—and see that he is reading Keynes's "Economic Consequences of the Peace." Another patient comes to the table and I watch him as he glances rapidly over the various titles. Now he stops and picks out the *American Magazine of Art*. I question him, and he tells me that he is a Swede. At the end of the table, a typical Son of Israel is absorbed in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

And here, sirs, is the purpose of my letter. I, a young American, want to warn my countrymen—beware the foreigner! Apparently he can not be made to love our all-fiction magazines. Somehow or other he does not want to forget that he has a mind. I am, etc.,

A CONVALESCENT PATIENT.

GORKY'S REMINISCENCES.

SIRS: I am sorry indeed to see the words "the end" at the close of this week's installment of Gorky's reminiscences of Tolstoy. What a debt we owe you of the *Freeman* for giving us this searching analysis of a great soul! What an achievement is Gorky's. By these few notes and letters he has cleared away the mists of sentimentality and idealization which were gathering about the old Russian giant, and now we feel as though we can see him face to face. It happened that a few hours after reading this last chapter in your current issue I came across a review of Gorky's reminiscences in a recent issue of the London *Athenaeum*. I think perhaps you will be interested in the following comment:

There probably never was a man with a greater desire just to live—for it is actual physical life that Tolstoy means, life at any price. He was an embodiment of the fierce, clutching life-impulse of the primeval slime, of that tenacity which persisted through geologic time, which emerged, weakened but indomitable, from the rigours of ice-ages, earthquakes and inundations, and the enmity of wild beasts; which would abandon any standard, adopt any condition, if thereby life might continue. What, to him, is the value of philosophies, of ideals,

of noble impulses? Life has already used, and kicked away, thousands of these props. They may have an incidental use, but what have they to do with life itself? What have they to say to a man who has realized that his very life is to be taken from him, that he has got to die? But having realized the existence of the amazing contradiction that he, having life, must yet die, he searches for a way of making this credible. Can it be that the life he knows, this fierce, familiar thing he loves so intensely is but the shadow of some other life, some real life that does not admit the monstrous contradiction of death? He pounces on this idea, he turns it over; there may be something in it. For a time, at any rate, he gets a gospel out of it. . . . These things gnaw at him, and more as he gets older. He who was once so keenly delighted with every living thing, who, like a master of life, understood all its manifestations, grows uninterested. He takes no interest in the people who come to see him; life is infinitely fertile, he knows that. But what does that matter if it has to come to an end? It is the Tolstoy of this stage who exists in Gorky's notes. He is coarse, for he knows life; he knows that all its roots are in the flesh. He is irreverent, for he is without illusions. He is penetrating and impatient. And although he knows of nothing greater than life, of nothing worth dying for, although he finds everything of that kind "invented," we feel that his knowledge of life is nevertheless completely adequate. . . . But suppose that an insight, ever fiercer and more penetrating than his own, were turned on to those very truths of which his knowledge seems so triumphant and complete, and found precisely the things he denied. It is more than ordinarily interesting that Gorky should remark that when Dostoevsky was the subject of discussion, Tolstoy seemed constrained, ill at ease, and profoundly insincere."

I am, etc.,

T. F.

LIGHT ON MR. RUSSELL.

SIRS: I have a watch which was my hourly reliance until it changed its way of telling time. Its minute hands are beyond criticism but the hour hand has taken to quitting, starting, reversing, at pleasure; (not mine).

Mr. Bertrand Russell's articles on Russia shed light not only on Russia but on the cold calm machinery of the great philosopher-mathematician mind. "I went to Russia," writes Mr. Russell, "believing myself a Communist, but—" That is the way he puts it, and not "believing myself a Communist, provided Russia panned out satisfactorily" or "provided another visit to Plato's Republic, in the original, satisfied me." There was no "provided" at all. Mr. Russell wrote himself down as "believing." In Russia Mr. Russell apparently changed more than his mind; he changed the way he makes up his mind.

That watch of mine is still good for minutes but it invites the consultation of other timepieces whenever I must know at what o'clock the world finds itself. I am, etc.,

New York City.

HEBER BLANKENHORN.

THE THEATRE.

PANTOMIME.

A MYTHOLOGY has grown around the motion-picture in behalf of pantomime. Literally the motion-picture is a pantomime now; it has been so from the beginning. But its progression does not lie in the path of more pantomime—much rather toward less of it.

In considering the art of acting, if the voice is left out altogether, the problem consists of a choice of those details of gesture that will best convey and recall and suggest the whole of life—the sense of actuality. Punch and Judy is this suggestion at its simplest. The puppets' repertoire is an elementary one in which every move fits to a conventional, stereotyped and widely understood meaning.

This is, in the main, pantomime as it has been practised up to the present by most actors for the screen. The fault here has been with the material. The chief complaint against the motion-picture is that it is a stereotyped and easily anticipated product throughout, endowed with little beauty except that which may be accidental to it. Plot, narrative, characters, and characterization have all been set in a uniform mould. This uniformity has progressed to such an extent that producers themselves are now aware that the "studio type" must be eliminated before their work will assume both lifelike and artistic proportions. Pantomime, in its largest sense—the silent acting of a part—is much more than merely communication or expression. It is, to begin with,

highly decorative. If the ballet has taught anything to the modern stage, it is that by the fine selection of his movements the actor may not only significantly and eloquently talk with his head, his eyes, his shoulders, his hands and his feet, and his entire carriage, but may make that utterance beautiful as well. Such actors as Miss Barrymore and her brothers, have certain moments of beauty that are almost exterior to the moment itself; bits of decorative line that are an added gift of the gods who see to the setting of stages.

But pantomime is always much more than expressive or decorative. It is at its best suggestive and reflective. In its power of suggestion it can be the finest of all instruments for tragic drama, awakening vast cycles of epic memory with the appropriate sweep of the hands or lift of the eyes. It is always concerned with compressing a host of human memories into a single formula that will stand for the lot of them. Because it does, by this very act, drop so much that is disordered and unfinished and realistic, and because it is in its very nature balanced and patterned, pantomime is able to call to mind all the large generalizations of life, on which much tragic drama is based. Synge, in his essay on "The Tragic Theatre" says for tragedy, "we summon rhythm, balance, pattern, images that remind us of vast passions, the vagueness of past times, all the chimeras that haunt the edge of trance. . . ." This was the acting of Bernhard, florid with an excess of formula, by which nevertheless great hinterlands of emotion were called forth.

Indeed, pantomime is French in many of its avenues, and most French in its awareness, and by the purposes of self-consciousness it sometimes serves. The acting of such players as the Guitrys, father and son, has references and implications, with France behind them, that lead deeply into the entire art of illusion. The son writes pungent, witty farces and comedies, related closely to the sex-hunt, that are just so much better than our own gross transcriptions of the fundamental human adventure as most French prefiguring and vision of human beings and their affairs is clearer, more accurate and less dishonest than our own. The father acts with delicacy and precision in scoring the shades and passages of emotion and thought. His selected art throws into relief the insensitive method of many British and American actors who stand in the first rank in their own countries. Comparatively, the Guitrys have much in their favour.

The French stage, like the Italian stage in a less well-defined fashion, has an obviously well-developed alphabet of interpretation, a complete gamut of pantomimic expression. The French passion for making everything clear has had something to do with this development of definite symbols for dramatic ideas. But French culture generally is an instance of the increasing conventionalization of any well-founded and sophisticated life. In music and in painting, French art has spread through layer on layer of re-statement and revision into the cool atmospheres of a patterned beauty. In the theatre, the French objective has always been a high clear laughter at human folly. And comedy, close to life but always just outside its gates, demands a ritual and routine of expression, a schematic structure on which to survey the scene and from which to shoot at it.

Copeau, who is now back in Paris with his Theatre de Vieux Colombier, disclosed this when he played at the Garrick Theatre in New York. But the Guitrys have an even more sensitive and highly developed

sign-language, so complete and so well organized and closely interwoven and impinging, that it even has moments of overcoming the impediment of conventionalization, to the point of imparting the emotion of reality. It does not have many moments of this kind, because, being French, it deals for the most part with material that is in itself full of attitudes, commentary upon life, draws constantly a trajectory of intellectual observation, as distinct from the representation of life itself. Even in "Pasteur," which Lucien Guitry plays with a quietude, a lack of gesture and an absence of rising and falling tonality that is astonishing, the procession of facts in a great man's life is not accomplished without accompanying overtones of fine comedy and philosophic wit. Its delicate regard for the sentiment of the occasion does not keep it from penetrating into the whole humbuggery of great men, the ceremonial about them, illuminating the rise of human careers to climax and recognition, and exposing the stupidity of the human audience to the actual elements of greatness growing before it.

These have been the purposes, before Molière and since, of the French theatre, and they have brought an increasing refinement to the use of pantomime. It is not without astonishment for the observer that Lucien Guitry becomes reminiscent of Charlie Chaplin. The continental music-hall is full of such actors, and doubtless the great Chaplin found the bare materials for his genius there. Comedy best can use and can thrive upon a stenography of the kind the French have given to their stage. Life itself is not comic at all; it is the bare bone of facts. Only human intervention, human observation, the sudden interruption of a human attitude, makes comedy out of a handful of common things. Chaplin, it might be said, with the very smallest bag of tricks, stands constantly as the figure of such intervention.

The problem of the motion-picture as it refers to pantomime is not one, however, that Chaplin can solve. It becomes clear now, as the motion-picture goes on its way that a Chaplin can have little effect on the main stream of it. He is unique, availing himself of the machinery of cinematography for expression, but contributing nothing to the infinitely troubling problem of expressing the aspect of life itself in terms of motion.

There are well-defined differences between the stage and the screen. Both are alike now in their swift movement toward naturalism. In this light, the acting of fine if limited artists such as the Guitrys has no meaning outside of being an abundant exposition of an art that is purely French, more French than dramatic. The tendency on the modern stage, a belated ripple of the widening circle from Moscow, is an effort to show life in the very essence of its accidental, unfinished, and despotic quality, to thrust into the very texture of the presentation an imputation of the flux, and constant change and transformation of colour and form that modern persons find in living itself. No formulized, established mode or ritual of expression is equal to such a great task. It needs most of all an unflagging and constant imaginative heat, which will throw no imagery into the same style twice and will give to presentation the differentiation, the strange quality of each moment, which is in life itself.

The public itself asks more and more for the bare bodkin of existence, the stuff of fact. Life is seldom so neatly trimmed as the conventional drama makes it out to be, and a tide has set in against its

conventional presentation on the stage. The frustration of modern life has created a hunger and desire for an art that will show these incompleteness in all their intimacy. That is why a set pantomimic style will not survive now in the movie. It is apparent that the elliptical and conventionalized gesture, of studied "pantomime," is what the cinema must be rid of, along with all the rigid formula of plot, of action and of characterization that have stupefied and choked it. In place of a great formulization of acting, the problem of the motion picture to-day is that of a more exact and more appropriate selection of gesture, harmonious and decorative, and a more closely woven texture of representation.

Mechanically considered, aside from the effort of the actor himself, the motion-camera always makes the first choice of the details of illusion; and this choice is an automatic one. No camera yet invented can run swiftly enough in its flow of film to catch every subtle rhythm in unbroken smoothness, every fine shade of movement in its complete quality. The actor's constant fight, if he assumes the burden of modern illusion, is not to further this elimination. It is instead to make his own selection of gesture so evocative in the single movement and so complete in the gamut, that he is certain to give at every moment actual proof of that complete absorption of the substance and spaces of contemporary life that every art gives at its zenith.

RALPH BLOCK.

MISCELLANY.

It was about to rain the other day, and the only thing that brightened the metropolitan slum through which I was walking was the promise in the afternoon paper's headlines of a fresh European war. That sweet and savoury possibility threw me into a rosy trance as I passed through street after street of shabby yellow-brick boxes—little better than outdoor ovens fit for roasting potatoes in—street after street of bleary windows and blind alleys and furtive little recesses in the bricks that could hardly be called rooms: the No Man's Land of a great city. This gay ramble was arrested, it is painful to confess, by a flirtation with a young lady. In spite of the great advance of charitable regulation in the poorer quarters of our towns there was no proper official person on hand to supervise this impromptu adventure. The young lady smiled at me and I smiled at her, and before either a district visitor or a lady policeman could intervene she was artfully tacking down the street, and I was following villainously after her, a "Resolute" on the heels of a "Challenger."

THE skies had begun to spatter the pavement with a cindery liquid, and to protect herself from the shower the impudent doxie (for no person, however charitably disposed, could guess anything else from her behaviour) flung a gunnysack at arm's-length over her head and began to trip quickly along under this improvised umbrella like the young person in that awful picture called "The Storm" at the Metropolitan Museum; only in real life the young lady was alone and her escort was striding, with a painful attempt at dignity, in the rear. She turned the corner and I thought she had given me the slip: that's the way a great many flirtations probably end, even without the aid of a lady policeman. But this was reckoning without the eternal depravity of human nature. As I approached the corner I found two demure blue eyes peeping, under a gunnysack-hood, round the edge of a fence, and when I got near the young lady held the jute rag aloft in invitation and broke her provocative silence with speech. "Do you want to come under here with me?" this Theda Bara of the ash-heap asked. .

THAT invitation put a strain on my part of our weak and erring flesh, I can tell you, and if it had not been for the slight difference in our heights it would have been dollars to doughnuts against my being able to hold out. Fortunately for the angels of righteousness there was a gulf of three feet between us—she was about as tall as most other children of seven or eight—and when she found that I would get wet if she prolonged the flirtation she flowered into a parting smile and flung herself down the grey vista of the street. Only it was far from being a grey vista as long as her yellow hair darted like a sunbeam against the dead drab walls.

WHAT is the use of making an embroidered moral sampler out of another paragraph? It is plain that a world that hasn't succeeded in starving all its children has a whopping good chance to pull out of the worst mess its guardians and governors are capable of stewing? While there's life—fresh and impudent and adventurous—in Hell's Kitchen or Skunk Hollow or Hoxton there may still be hope, even in the Hall of Mirrors. It is consoling to remember what an enormous number of charity-workers, teachers, play-organizers, nurses, policemen, and miscellaneous experts it takes to subdue an ordinarily healthy child. Every time a baby is born, life goes on a spree. What we call Civilization is the dregs and orts of the morning after.

How many red-white-and-blue Americans, I wonder, have lived and died without ever knowing the meaning of the word "Sulgrave"—without ever having even heard the word perhaps? It is ten to one that Old Abe himself, who is now sharing a grass-plot with George Canning in front of Westminster Abbey, didn't know that Sulgrave Manor was the ancestral home of George Washington: which only shows how slack we have been in getting hold of the essentials of true Americanism. Even in these regenerate days "Sulgrave" is as intelligible as a Greek epitaph to most of us until we find ourselves crossing the Atlantic; it makes its first appearance about the third day out, when the steward sees that a sufficient number of folk are on deck waiting to be thrilled by a smudge of smoke on the horizon or the black sheen of a tumbling dolphin against the sunlight. When neither the ship nor the fish take the stage according to schedule, the steward slips the prospectus of the Sulgrave Institution into your lap. You pick it up, a little disappointed, because you were thinking it was time he was bringing round the soup, and read that the Sulgrave Institution, with offices in London and New York, has for the purpose of its being "to foster friendship and to prevent misunderstanding among English-speaking peoples." Then you discover in a parenthesis what "Sulgrave" is.

FROM May to December of the present year the Sulgrave Institution is circularizing the Atlantic pretty thoroughly. Its purpose is to incite the passengers on every vessel to celebrate the tercentenary of the Mayflower compact, together with the meeting of the Virginia Legislative Assembly, the signing of the Magna Charta, and various other equally anomalous beginnings of our "free" institutions. Said service is to be opened by "prayer for friendship among English-speaking peoples and others of goodwill and the maintenance unimpaired of our free institutions." I am told that on one particular ship a few weeks ago, there were a number of callous people who had heard this tune played so often on the Musical Banks that they couldn't even say Amen without yawning. The only essay in Anglo-American understanding that was heard throughout the whole voyage was an acrimonious discussion between a Buffalo clergyman and a Newcastle engineer on the respective merits of the Fourth Avenue Subway and the Piccadilly Tube. Which reminds me of a remark attributed to an urbane British official after coming from a conference at our State Department in Washington. He was trying to explain his lack of success to a French representative. "The difficulty between

us and the Americans," he said, "is that we speak the same language; we understand each other too well."

MAYBE the Sulgrave Institution's appeal would prove a little more persuasive if its smile of friendship didn't reveal such a very unpleasant display of teeth. Indeed, in this respect the prospectus reminds one of Mr. Dombey's friend, Mr. Carker. "To bring together into a closer community those societies . . . that are engaged in any work which tends towards the understanding of the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic point of view, culture, laws, and related institutions." This certainly sounds a bit like Part I of the Prussian doxology which Professor Cramb propagated in England in the days before the war; Part II manifestly consists in thrusting the *sogenannte* Anglo-Saxon-Celtic point of view upon those degenerate people who inhabit Russia and China and Mexico and those other regions of the world where the supply of petroleum clearly indicates that an all-wise Providence prepared for the coming of those two great countries that can manufacture the largest number of automobiles and oil-burning turbines. And here is another fang in the prospectus of the Sulgrave Institution which bites even a little deeper. "All friendly persons, as well as all schools, all churches, all civic, political and business organizations, are invited to join in this celebration of free institutions, as a challenge to the bolshevist and *all radicals* (the italics are mine) and as a means of spreading the blessing of these institutions throughout the world." So that is what Anglo-American friendship is good for, is it? Well, well!

JOURNEYMAN.

POETRY.

O WHEN WILL YOU RETURN?

Oh when will you return to thrill these empty rooms?
Sweeping your crimson garments through their ways,
Bringing your feast and festival again,
Sounding the music of those splendid days
When we hung scarf and banner from our windows
Telling our joy to all the passers-by;
I used to touch the stars and moon with reaching,
You lifted up my dreaming hands so high.
O kindle again the lapsing altar lights
And let the censers swing, the incense burn—
The arching halls are bleak when you have left them,
The echoing rooms are sick for your return;
Grow strange, grow silent, wistful for your coming,
Longing, forlorn and uninhabited,
Again to be content beneath your footsteps;
Waiting for your old, lost, desired tread.

HELEN HOYT.

THE LAKE IN THE WOODS.

The little lake in the woods
Has waters of pale gold.
Its sentinel trees and sombre,
Purple and brown and umber
Are ranged to left and right,
Like monks in praying-hoods
That keep their vigils cold.
And midway on the height
A shaft of emerald fire—
One young green slender sapling
Stands like an acolyte.
With gaze that does not tire
He sees the sunlight dappling
The brows of the stern trees,
The lake stir in the breeze—
And on the open wood,
The gorse swaying and glowing,
Shaking her gown of gold.
Her shadow wavers on the grass,
She dreams of dead caresses;
Like a dancing-girl that goes to Mass
Between her lovers' kisses.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER.

BOOKS.

COMMON SENSE ABOUT FRANCE.

ONE of the saddest results of any new international alliance is the propaganda-literature which inevitably accompanies the diplomatic marriage. Something of the sort was discernable in England as early as the beginnings of the Entente, back in King Edward's time. From despising French characteristics, popular sentiment swung over to imitating them, ending, when the war came, in positive adulation; as Mr. Dell says, "frivolous" and "immoral" France became "a sort of hermaphrodite deity made up of Joan d'Arc and M. Clemenceau." But this change of opinion was mild compared with the violent uprooting of old prejudices and the complacent ignorance of France when we ourselves entered the war. On the French side, the worst kind of chauvinist propagandists—M. Bergson is a case in point—although, as a matter of fact, he is not fundamentally French in his point of view—were sent to America to convince us of the eternal justice of her cause, and in spite of a few temporary aberrations about French militarism and the like, they seem to have captured Mr. Wilson securely. On our side, equally stupid and uninformed publicists and journalists invaded the coasts of our unsuspecting ally, and sent home glowing accounts of *la belle France* and the immortal *poilu*. Camouflage became a popular word. Then, without mercy, came the books—histories of France, explanations of the Alsace-Lorraine quarrel, the deep-dyed villainy of M. Cailloux, the martial vigour of the Frenchman coupled with a complete lack of the military spirit, *feuilletons*, apologetics, travelogues for the Chautauquas, in short, a very depressing flood of print.

Perhaps all the more depressing since although it is nowhere more difficult to make two races understand each other than when introducing Anglo-Saxons and Latins to each other, at the same time we most need to know the better qualities of the French people. Our civilization, and this is even truer of America than of England, can learn more from France than from almost any other country. Yet we can not learn anything at all unless, along with our being made acquainted with her great qualities, we are at the same time made acquainted with her weaknesses. In this respect, indeed, the French are particularly open to misunderstanding. The first thing to learn is that there is not merely one homogeneous France; there is the France of the peasant, of the proletariat, of the bourgeoisie. And there is Paris and the various provincial regions. Not only that, in the individual Frenchman there are paradoxical opposites which are extremely hard to reconcile: for example, closeness, even stinginess, side by side with great generosity; high intelligence, scepticism, and rationality, coupled with a rather childish love of fine phrases and the tendency to run after *la gloriole*; a deep contempt for politicians coincident with a mystical readiness to lay down one's life for *la patrie*; a deep conservatism in the major things along with a fine iconoclasm towards historical traditions and what are known in other countries as the conventions; an unerring fineness of taste in artistic things at the very moment when they shock their Anglo-Saxon brethren by a frankness at the facts of life. But beneath all these contradictions run two unending streams of French character, intellectual sincerity and the readiness to face facts, the two points, in truth, on which these people can teach us the most. Perhaps nowhere is this basic French good sense better illustrated than

in a contrast between President Wilson and M. Clemenceau. Equally with the President, the former French Premier's conception of *la victoire* was sentimental and romantic, utterly divorced from economic realities. But when it was all over, when he had got what, as he confessed, he had waited forty years to obtain, did the French Premier indulge in rhodomontade about the heart of the world being broken, if the treaty were not immediately ratified? He did not. His French good sense reasserted itself. He coolly stated that the "victory" was only a Pyrrhic victory after all.

I know of no recent book which gives a better picture of the French people as they really are, both of their lovable and unpleasant qualities, nor of the economic and political and intellectual life of present day France than that by Mr. Robert Dell, "My Second Country."

The author is peculiarly equipped for his task. His early boyhood love of France led him in time to make it his second country, and for many years he was the Paris correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, which post he held during the war almost to the end, when his exposure of the Austrian peace offer of 1917 made him *persona non grata* to M. Clemenceau, who was instrumental in bringing about his expulsion, which now will probably soon be—if it has not already been—rescinded. He is thoroughly acquainted with all classes of French people, and those impulsive critics who have taken umbrage at some of his strictures on French institutions and methods ought to recall his own words in his introduction to this book:

The more I know the French people the fonder I become of them. Like all human beings, they have the defects of their qualities, but they have one quality which makes them the most charming people in the world to live with—they understand the art of living.

Mr. Dell's criticisms spring not from malice but from deep affection and from the desire to see the best in French life endure; possibly, also, from an honesty before facts which sooner or later comes to be second nature with all who spend many years among the French people. Yet this temperamental sympathy and intelligent, discriminating liking, are not his only equipment. He has as well enormous intellectual vitality; his style is of firm texture—one feels he would be an incomparable *raconteur*—and has acquired something of the incisive clarity, combined with subtlety and wit, so characteristic of the best French prose. He can be gay without being meaninglessly vivacious, and profoundly critical without being portentous. For example, discussing the fact that the majority of French Catholics are not really religious in spirit at all, but look upon the Church as a convenient social and political institution (in later years, unhappily as the best ally of reaction), he remarks:

The Franciscans in the Middle Ages started the convenient theory that one heard mass in a Franciscan church, if one arrived before the '*Ite, missa est*,' with which it concludes, and thereby filled their churches to the detriment of the parish churches and the indignation of the secular clergy. This theory must still have partisans in France, for on any Sunday morning one may see large numbers of men arriving at the Madeleine just before the end of the eleven o'clock High Mass. They wait at the bottom of the church to watch the women go out, and very agreeable acquaintances, I am told, have often been made in this way. The English Catholic is a very different person from the Catholic of a Catholic country: he takes the whole thing seriously, as Æneas Piccolomini (afterwards Pius II) said with contemptuous pity of the Irish of his day. The Catholic of a Catholic country—at any rate in France and Italy—is always exercising his ingenuity to sail as near the wind as possible—to get around the laws of the

¹ "My Second Country. (France.)" Robert Dell. New York: John Lane Company.

Church or to discover the least that he can possibly do to comply with them. He has the valuable aid of the moral theologians, who have, for instance, decided in France that a water-fowl is fish and may, therefore, be eaten on a day of abstinence. So the wealthy French Catholic, whose delight it is to dine as sumptuously as he possibly can on a Friday without breaking the laws of the Church, eats wild duck with a clear conscience.

Politically, Mr. Dell is a Socialist, but this classification should be taken with reservations. Nothing is more confusing to the foreign observer in France than the various political divisions; one ought, indeed, to be provided with an advance terminology before attempting to pass judgment, and Mr. Dell furnishes this in his excellent chapter, "Socialism, Syndicalism, and State Capitalism." The latter term, indeed is what is called in France and Belgium *étatisme*, for which no adequate English word exists. The French from their sad experience with State monopolies—tobacco, matches, the postal service, purchase of the Western Railway—are disillusioned about the kind of nationalization which would be under the control of a government bureaucracy; monopolies are in essence the same whether under capitalistic or socialistic control; they have the consumer at their mercy and end inevitably in economic slavery. It was partly the result of the experience with State monopolies, partly disgust with parliamentary palliative reforms, which led to the Syndicalist revolt in France—in Mr. Dell's opinion a healthy corrective of mere parliamentarianism and a step in the right direction towards preparing the proletariat to use power "if and when it could get it." Syndicalism, in a word, can never come to terms with State Socialism, but, according to this author, "its differences with Revolutionary Socialism are entirely concerned with questions of method and can easily be adjusted especially now when the majority of Socialists in France have abandoned all hope of effecting anything important by parliamentary action."

This contempt of parliamentary methods arises not merely from skepticism about political democracy, but as much from the stupidity of the bourgeoisie which exercises an administrative dictatorship, increasingly galling not alone to the city proletariat but as well to the peasant who more and more must find that a policy of protection, favouring the farmers, will not enable him in the long run to compete with foreign agricultural competition on modern lines. The scandal of import duties on food when France can not produce enough for herself can not last forever. Yet, as Mr. Dell admits in his chapter, "Small Property And Its Results," it is still doubtful in case of a revolution whether the peasant would throw his influence on the side of the proletariat rather than the bourgeoisie. In the latter class our author finds the real hope of a revolution which will unseat the present bourgeois dictatorship as the old *ancien regime* was upset when it blindly refused to make the necessary concessions. Indeed, in Mr. Dell's opinion it is doubtful if any concessions now can save the bourgeoisie; France is rushing headlong to financial bankruptcy, if the present policy of military expansion and attempt to make France a great industrial nation is persisted in—as it unfortunately seems to be persisted in. Of course one does not have to agree with all this, but it is a relief to have the facts put so cogently and to find a writer who is not afraid to risk his intellectual reputation by stating what he considers to be the possibilities. At all events, the reader is given ample material to make his own judgments.

But whatever one's agreement or disagreement with Mr. Dell politically or economically, there will be few to challenge his cultural judgment. The true France, he says echoing the words of their greatest writer of the 19th century, is the France of Voltaire and Montesquieu, the skeptical, the rationalist, the anti-religious, the intellectualistic France. France may have her romantic reactions—her Rousseaus and Chateaubriands and her modern Bergsons and mystics—but she always goes back to the older tradition. With the disillusion resulting from the war and the ensuing peace, the younger France is ready for a rationalistic revival. "*Il le faut, tu ne sauras pas,*" say religion and patriotism. They reply: 'We will not; we will know.'" And if that spirit conquers, France may yet return, repudiating her present leaders, to her true rôle—the leader and the originator, in the Western world, of civilized ideas and the art of living.

HAROLD STEARNS.

THE SOCIAL CONSCIENCE.

PROFESSOR MECKLIN's book¹ raises a number of questions that have little direct reference to the content or quality of the book itself. One wonders, to begin with, what prospects of survival the systematic treatise has in these days of dear paper and dear printing; and then one asks oneself how many people still read a systematic treatise through when it appears. How many people, for instance, will read Professor Mecklin's book? For a treatise on ethics, it is exceptionally interesting; it is unusually well written; it is peculiarly free from the conventional jargon of the schools; in short, it is a very readable book. Moreover, the writer brings to his task a wide and mature scholarship and an extensive knowledge of the relevant modern literature of the subject. Yet one doubts whether many people will read it. For one thing, the sheer bulk—the book runs to four hundred and thirty-nine packed pages—will be prohibitive to people who have acquired the habit of taking their wisdom in quick, small doses. Further, it is probable that even among folk of a more serious turn, there is just now a certain suspicion of the systematic treatise. It is true that Professor Mecklin calls his book an introduction; but that is his own modesty. The book is in fact a pretty extensive exploration of the field with which it deals. That is something of a handicap. For the moment, we are all at sea in ethics, as in most other things, and at a time when so much of our thinking has to be experimental and tentative, the scholastic disquisition attempts more than we believe it can accomplish. We must learn our new lesson, "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little"; and the time for systematization is not yet here.

Dr. Mecklin would probably be the first to admit all this. He would say that his book was no more than a statement of the modern problem in ethics and that it was in no sense to be regarded as an attempt to prescribe solutions. The chief value of the book lies in its clear perception of the revolution which has overtaken human society, and of the inadequacy of the traditional acceptances for the business of the present. The book deals primarily with the situation in America, and its analysis of the historical background of the present confusion is for the most part convincing and luminous. But the problem is not peculiar to America; it is essentially one throughout the whole area of the machine-civilization. Summarily, the position may be stated thus: the individualist tradition which we owe to the Protestant Reformation has run its course through the political theory that lay behind the French Revolution, through Adam Smith and *laissez faire*, through nineteenth-century industrialism, to the present anarchy. But the mechanical invention

¹ "An Introduction to Social Ethics." John M. Mecklin. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

and development which gave to individualism its supreme chance, and produced the extreme economic inequities of the present, contained within itself what was in the end to prove the dissolution of the individualistic synthesis. The growth of the machine, especially its application to locomotion, and its continual elaboration, set afoot a new social integration far more extensive and complex than the world had hitherto known. We have come in consequence to a state of the world in which the philosophy of our grandfathers has become not merely irrelevant but positively dangerous. Yet we are trying to handle this new world with the old traditional ideas, in politics, economics, ethics, everywhere; hence our present bewilderment. All this Professor Mecklin sees clearly, and his exposition of the new problem is sound and vigorous as far as it goes. The main criticism to which he exposes himself is that he does not go far enough, and that he stops short of the natural conclusion of his own logic.

For instance, he has many incisive and important things to say about marriage. He recognizes that the feminist movement and the political enfranchisement of women have introduced a difficult complication into the home; but he does not appear to realize that the point of the complication is the anomalous position of the married woman who is politically independent but who also is economically dependent upon her husband. The marital relation can never be satisfactory in the future until the parties to it enter upon it on an equal economic footing; and some provision will have somehow to be made for supplementing the political freedom of women with a genuine economic independence for the married woman. Again, on the theoretical question of property-rights, Professor Mecklin is essentially sound. But he does not seem to perceive that the point at issue to-day is not the right to own property but the limits within which property may be used as capital. Dr. Mecklin speaks of the socialization of private property, and he sees the part that may be played by taxation in the process. But the matter has really gone far past that point. The question that we shall have to answer is how far we are going to allow (to use Professor Hobhouse's phrase) "property for power." How far, that is, does the possession of property entitle a man to control the life and labour of other men? And the plain answer is that property no more confers such power upon a man than blue blood does. We do not necessarily condemn the present system of private capital, and until we keep clear in our minds the distinction between private property and the privilege which has accrued to property under the industrial system, we shall not think fruitfully upon what is the most important immediate issue of our day.

One great and unintelligible omission in Dr. Mecklin's book is a treatment of the doctrine of the State and the relation of the individual to it, in view of the situation created by the multiplication of large and powerful voluntary associations both within and without the commonwealth. This is a very pressing and difficult problem, and it is bound to modify very materially the conventional ideas of political obligation. In view of the present discredit of the State, as the result of the war, it is increasingly clear that it will not in the future be able to exact the loyalty of the individual on the same terms as in the past. It will more and more have to face a competition with other associations in which men are gathered together. The British Medical Association some time ago called upon its members to resist the application of the duly enacted Insurance Act in Great Britain; and the same situation may be repeated in New York State. In cases of this sort, what is to be the criterion of personal loyalty? Or suppose the case of a citizen of a recalcitrant member of the League of Nations—where does his ultimate loyalty lie? The Church is at present too little self-conscious to feel the pressure of the problem; but in the labour-unions, and in employers' associations it may become acute at any moment. It is not to be answered

off-hand that a man's loyalty is to the larger interests of the community, for the labour-union and the employers' association may quite sincerely believe that their resistance to the State is in the larger interests of the community. Is the State still the object of our first loyalty? Shall our loyalty to it over-ride all our other loyalties? If not, where are we to draw the line? Where, as between the functional association within the community, the State as the organ of the community as a whole, and the League of Nations as the organ of the world-community, is the individual to stand? Here once more we are at sea; and there is no problem in ethics which so much requires discussion.

Yet, despite these criticisms, it remains to be said that Dr. Mecklin has given us a very good book. If he does not lead us out of the fog into clear daylight, it is because, like the rest of us, he does not yet discern the path. But as far as he goes, he leads us carefully and soundly; and we are grateful for all honest thinking that helps to clear the way.

RICHARD ROBERTS.

SHORTER NOTICES.

It is hard to say whether in "Mrs. Warren's Daughter"¹ Sir Harry Johnston is trying to imitate himself or is imitating Mr. H. G. Wells. The lively scheme of using characters which descend from other books is of course his own, but he uses it here a second time without gusto. "Mrs. Warren's Daughter" somehow fails in momentum though it has fluency; but most of all it lacks the closely packed observation which enlivened every page of his earlier novel "The Gay-Donbeys." Its defects and some of its merits are those of a typical Wells novel. Sir Harry Johnston has hit upon an important contemporary subject, the later story of the woman movement in England, and he has seized the main outlines; but he quite omits salient motives and counter-motives; and fails to find a many-sided living centre. The book lacks the swift-running general psychology in which Wells is adept; and it particularly fails to create a stream of people. Vivie Warren is like those many persons whom everyone finds somewhere within the range of vision, whose outlines are unmistakable but who never move around to the point where they must be observed. She is external to the end, as are most of the other characters, with the possible exception of Mrs. Warren, whose talk is happily racy if sometimes too full of ideas. The single compelling section of the book is the middle one, in which the effects of the Pankhurst leadership are given with circumstantiality; but this is brief, and the rest falls away from it both in matter and tone. It seems curious that Sir Harry could have found so rich a pocket of ore and not have tried to mine it to the rock. "Mrs. Warren's Daughter" is a too-simple sketch of a notable subject, and it is nothing more. C. M. R.

THE suspicion that Mary Austin has assiduously read Henry James in no measure detracts from the evident merits of "26 Jayne Street."² It is cast in a repressed yet meticulously engendered manner, labouring quite successfully to present the core of a problem that necessarily grows abstract at times. The unrest, economic and spiritual, that shook, and is still shaking, the very foundations of America and which became most perceptible when we entered the war, is the background of the novel. Detached from this background but illuminating it because of their own personal representation of its phases are two women and a man. Neith Schuyler is the focus of the book and it is through her that the changing order of things is brought before the reader. The traditions that made Neith have made her peculiarly susceptible to new currents of thought and living. When she leaves her rich aunts to live down on Jayne Street in Greenwich Village, in order that she may meet that world which is so strange to her and which becomes so vital eventually, she can hardly quite be called an outsider. Something within her, the very makeup of her temperament, gives her ingress and understanding. If the new world, the radical element that is steadily pushing upward, is typified for her in the personal relation with Adam Frear, we may be sure that she would have reached the same conclusions anyway. It is when she learns that Rose Matlock has had an affair with Frear, the

¹ "Mrs. Warren's Daughter." Sir Harry Johnston. New York: The Macmillan Company.

² "26 Jayne Street." Mary Austin. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

man she loves and is engaged to, that Neith is confronted with the problem of being consistent with the beliefs that reason has taught her are just. While Frear is pretty much of a dummy and the reader is hardly concerned with the success of his *affaire du cœur*, he is important in that he confronts Neith with the problem which is the theme of the book. Neith has absorbed from Frear an idea of economic and sociological justice; he has taught her to understand the unutterable selfishness of personal emotionalism that has thrown the world so far from its proper balance. When Frear flings aside Rose Matlock, who has worked so courageously with him for the welfare of mankind, and comes to Neith stupidly thinking that he may nonchalantly throw aside the old ties for new ones that please him more, he shows his inconsistency and failure to grasp the great truths he is preaching. As Neith feels, he must follow in his private life the rules he is laying down for society as a whole. This, of course, is an impossibility and Mrs. Austin does a certain violence to human nature in urging it, for when a man is in love he recognizes no principles which have existed before: he has entered a new world with new and entirely unforeseen complexities. Nevertheless, Mrs. Austin's is a sincere and intelligent handling of an intricate subject. Owing to her careful consideration and presentation of the attitudes of her characters the book moves slowly, but it is easy to feel the dynamic forces behind it.

H. S. G.

THE work of woman novelists has been worth noting for nearly three centuries, if only for their delineation of women. The ardent heroines of Aphra Behn and Eliza Haywood of romancing memory, though drawn from a Spanish literary model, had yet some of the blood of real life throbbing through their exultant veins as did never a prudent Pamela or a chaste Sophia. So the gentle heroines of Sarah Fielding, Mrs. Collyer, and other ladies of the Richardsonian school, more interested in "virtue" than in life, had yet touches of character and feeling drawn from a first-hand knowledge of womankind denied to their master. In her heroes Jane Austen often drew mere types of masculine honour or grace, but in Emma Woodhouse, Maria Bertram, Catherine Morland and Elizabeth Bennet she created real English girls who, chary of the secrets of their inner life, if they had any, outwardly lived and moved with a vitality greater than women in fiction had achieved hitherto. So when the great Victorian conspiracy against liberty of life and of spirit bore down heavily upon the bodies, minds, and souls of Victorian women, protests against the Tennysonian ideal of the pale, heavily draped, under-sexed and over-souled lady were led by three women. Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, and Mrs. Gaskell, each according to her kind, created new heroines. They lightened the draperies so far as they dared, freeing the gestures and the thoughts of their women; showed soul and sense in their normal relation; and added the mental endowment which the conventional female of the period flourished without. Jane Eyre, Maggie Tulliver, and Mary Barton, no mere passive lay-figures, knew the conflict between passion and reason which is the struggle and the zest of real life in a way untasted by their predecessors. Whereupon, with the freer realization of women, the psychological novel rapidly developed in pursuit of the eternal theme. Tess, Eustacia Vye, Diana, and Clara Middleton, careful studies of unusual women unusually placed, headed a long line running down to the present day, and increasingly the portraits come from the knowing hands of women novelists. Directed first by the greater women of the Victorian era, working as honestly as they knew how, reinforced by the example of the French delineators of women, British fiction has become more and more absorbed with the task of answering the question of why women are so, by explaining what in truth they are. Gradually new types of women have appeared as heroines. The sentimental *jeune fille* of the Goethe romance is no more out of date than the modest maiden of Victorian fable. In recent fiction there is an attempt to discard the unusual woman unusually tried in favour of the more ordinary type, now suppressed by conventional inhibitions, now expressed by the unexpected relaxing of restraints, but always feeling and reacting as a normal creature of earth. So the heroine tends to become thirty instead of twenty, to be only moderately beautiful and wise, the lines of her life thoroughly enmeshed with those of a painfully natural and pertinacious family, her hours occupied with commonplace events. And instead of the whole-hearted love of an ardent boy, or the brooding devotion of a Dobbin, her portion is apt to be but half the heart of a commonplace man already comfortably married to another. With such material, chosen apparently at random from London, Glasgow, or York, the modern realist works to show

to a conventionally blinded world what the nature of women is without the falsification of a sterile idealism or a futile prudery. Though haggard at times, it seems obvious that this modern heroine, made a little lower than the angels, is a more interesting companion for a lifetime or an hour than the old. In "Open the Door," Catherine Carswell writes a first novel on this feminine theme. She does not succeed, perhaps, in drawing merely a normal woman normally, but with great competence she portrays a slightly neurotic heroine of somewhat unusually varied experience, understandingly and with conviction. Joanna Bannerman is the artistically-minded daughter of a narrowly evangelical Glasgow family, who finds freedom, growth, disillusion, and finally satisfaction, in a series of love-episodes running the gamut of passionate experience from youthful curiosity, through ecstasy and despair, at last, unconvincingly, to spiritual fulfilment. It is in the conventional happy ending alone that the story fails. Not satisfied to leave Joanna sadder as well as wiser in what Mr. W. L. George more veraciously describes as one of the blind alleys of love, Miss Carswell brings about reconciliation of the warring forces in Joanna's nature in a final affair conventional and romantic in every sense of the words. Quite as interesting as the book's analysis of the love-life of Joanna, is the unsparing display of the irritations and futilities of the Bannermans' family life. "Open the Door" is one more blow at the established order of the middle-class British family with its false and unproductive loyalties, the wastefulness of its conceptions of filial obligation and the parental prerogative, an ideal which has led, especially in the case of unmarried daughters of the home, more often to complete self-effacement and negation than to such a plunge for freedom and self-expression as Joanna takes. In picturing the range and violence of this revolt against the tyranny of family ideas, Miss Carswell but gives the measure of the repression and the surrender which more often takes place. In its penetration to the secret springs of character and conduct, in its visualization of persons and interrelated groups, in its mastery of line and its sureness of phrase, this is no amateur effort but a first novel of some moment, provocative of thought and expectation.

H. S. H.

A REVIEWER'S NOTE-BOOK.

"I MUST confess I believe," said H. G. Wells in one of his early essays, "that if by some juggling with space and time Julius Cæsar, Napoleon, Edward IV, William the Conqueror, Lord Rosebery and Robert Burns had all been changed at birth it would not have produced any serious dislocation of the course of destiny." There we have the Marxist view of the Great Man, the logic of the economic interpretation of history: any other view of the individual and his powers is, to the Marxist and as Wells himself put it, "melodramatic." The world in general has come round to this way of thinking. Has not the war confirmed it? Where were the soldiers, the statesmen, the individuals of any kind sufficiently evil to cause the war, sufficiently wise to stop it, or strong enough to compass either? The world, people say, has become so "big" that the human will can not control the forces that sweep it like the tides. Modern statesmen, what are they but gesticulating figures on a sandbank? The hope of the liberals in the power of an organized intelligence that knows nothing of spiritual leadership is all that stands between the popular mind and an almost Turkish fatalism.

THIS universal modern view is one which the student of literature, however, can not accept. "Great writers and artists," said Tolstoy once, in conversation with an American friend, "are to me the high priests and leaders of evolution, the real sovereigns, who rule, not by force of guns and armies, but by moral authority." A perilous remark! Was Tolstoy the victim of a delusion, was he intoxicated with the conceit of his own power over words? The history of culture bears him out. Who can deny that the creative spirit has always fought on the losing side, that the great men have been the despised and the rejected, the "insulted and injured," that they have spoken in all appearance to the wind? But it is not the great

¹ "Open the Door." Catherine Carswell. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

men who have been time's laughing-stocks: even in the economic sphere it is they who tell. The Marxists reject great men and are themselves the creatures of Marx and it is a creature of Marx to-day, who has labelled as the lie it is the notion that statesmanship can not be creative. The world is too "big" to be controlled not because greatness is an illusion but because the material discoveries of the last century have put to sleep for the moment that in men which responds to greatness. But a century is short and the memory of mankind is long: we can not believe in the lasting dominion of blind forces, we who believe in literature. As regards the function of writers and artists, we are obliged to accept the "melodramatic" view. We are obliged, in a word, to believe in heroes, whether they swagger or not.

It is partly because of the light, corroborating our faith, that psychology has thrown upon these blind forces. So little has civilization advanced that we are still savages cowering in fear of a sinister "nature" which, in reality, exists only within ourselves. We no longer, to be sure, fear lightning and storms and those other phenomena which to primitive man appear as emanations of the Adversary. But we still fear what we imagine to be the "not ourselves" just the same; and fearing it we create objects for our fear. We fear poverty and our fear is responsible for the oppression that seems to justify it; we fear war and our fear is responsible for war; we fear the loss of caste, we fear the downfall of our nationality, and it is our fear that keeps us in jeopardy. These blind forces which dominate us and which are, we suppose, outside of us and beyond our control, are, in reality, projections of the blind forces in our own spirits. If we did not desire wealth, how could they have dominion over us who prevent us from getting it? It is our desire that makes us their victims. If we did not fear the loss of caste, how could we lose it? Ask those who have not lost it, although they have spent their lives insulting the established order. If people did not in their hearts, as members of a nationality, wish to outrival some other nationality, how could war exist? Capitalism, imperialism, those incubi that sit upon mankind and suck its veins, are the reflexes of our own weakness. We tolerate them because we fear them, and we fear them because there is that in us which demands what they supply: if we ceased to demand it they would collapse like the balloons they are.

COMFORTING conclusions might easily be drawn from this truth: it is notorious that idealism and optimism sleep on feather beds. But the fact is that of their own will few men are able to control their desires, to choose between their desires and to determine to satisfy some at the expense of others. Everyone knows that capitalism would collapse if the world went on a hunger strike: what happens to the price of any commodity when people refuse to buy it? But most men are children: like children they are the perpetual slaves of suggestion. Do they fail to respond when a poet who knows how to approach them tells them that poverty with an awakened mind is more desirable than the state of life pictured in the advertisements? But how many poets are able to tell them this with any authority? Meanwhile, day in day out, the advertisements talk and persuade and browbeat the popular mind, and the preachers and the politicians and the editors and the smart young business men and the shrewd old business men talk with them. A high standard of living! It is the religion of an industrial society: in the name of this gospel of buncombe America even now is spoiling for a fight with Mexico and Japan. Let the optimists sleep on their feather beds and continue to dream that because human nature is suggestible the world can easily be saved.

CAN it? For a hundred years the middle classes have been so debauched by the suggestions of politicians and business men and lawyers that their only thought is for a standard of living to maintain which they are obliged

to drive themselves like machines, crushing in themselves every impulse toward a sane existence. It is folly to suppose that they are open to the suggestion of the poets. That is why one looks to the workers who, debauched as they also are in a measure, are still as a class actuated by reality as the middle classes are not. But it is only because they are actuated by reality that one desires to see the government of the world fall into their hands, and they will continue to be actuated by reality only so long as the suggestions to which they respond are the suggestions of reality and not of buncombe. Why is the British labour movement so strong and the American labour movement so weak? Why does one feel that if the British labour party came into power it might accomplish much for the world, but that if American labour came into power it could accomplish nothing? Because while the British labour movement is actuated by a reality which has impelled it to think, to study, to discipline itself, to make itself more efficient than any other British party, American labour is actuated by the same buncombe as the American middle class: it hates capitalism because it wishes itself to be capitalistic, and this hatred prevents it from learning any of those things without which it can not prevail against capitalism. It is impelled, in short, not by desire but by fear, fear of itself, of its own weakness. A revolution impelled by personal motives, by hatred and fear, which is the corollary of hatred, can accomplish nothing but a transposition of classes. If we secretly wish to have wealth ourselves, how can we abolish the rule of wealth?

WE are children: we live by suggestion. And for this reason it is open to us merely to choose between heroes. Are we to follow the Rockefellers and the Carnegies, whom we do follow in the very fact and to the very degree that we hate them, because our hatred means that we envy them, or the sovereigns of whom Tolstoy speaks, the great artists and writers, who lead us not into the abyss but into the realization of ourselves? It would be easy to show that the British labour movement owes much to the suggestions of great spirits who have insulated its leading minds from the counter-suggestions of a middle-class that is debauched by the fantasies of property and race-pride and fixed them upon the study of justice, of self-discipline, of race-psychology, of reality, in short, social and personal alike. The rise of labour out of the blind slavery of its own weakness—is it not the proof of that moral authority of which Tolstoy speaks? The world is out of control, and politicians and business men are the first to admit it. But there is a logic in the proletarian movement which proves to us who believe in it that the future in just that respect will differ totally from the past. Self-determination for every individual, for every group, for every people—what is it but the essence of control, control from within? To recognize this, to desire it, is to recognize our childishness and the need of those great spirits who alone can awaken us to the implications of freedom. "There is in man," said Goethe, "a force—a spring of goodness, which counterbalances egoism; and if by a miracle it could for a moment suddenly be active in all men, the earth would be at once free from evil." Do we expect a miracle? We merely know that poets are able to touch this spring in us, that if poets were at the helm society would soon be very different from what it is, and that in an age like the present when men seek reality the poets are leading us whether we know their names or not.

THE Reviewer recommends the following recent books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"Representative One-Act Plays by American Authors," edited by Margaret Gardner Mayorga. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.

"Modern Greek Stories," translated by Demetra Vaka and Aristides Phoutrides. New York: Duffield and Co.

"Ditte: Girl Alive," by Martin Andersen Nexø. New York: Henry Holt and Co.

IT has been of interest to us to observe that this paper is being read with lively appreciation abroad as well as at home. Recently our attention was called to the fact that one of our articles was quoted, in part, in the *Svenska Dagblad* (Stockholm), then translated from the Swedish into German and printed in the Munich *Auslandspost*.

AMONG the letters received from foreign readers whose discernment requires no cachet, is this one:

I FEEL bound to tell you that though I have only seen one number, that of July 14th, the FREEMAN has already excited my enthusiasm. In particular Mr. Deïmel's article on Einstein, and Mr. Patten's on "The Failure of Liberal Idealism" are the best I have read on their respective subjects. "The Revolution and the Drama" is also an admirable article of unusual subtlety, though I do not share Mr. Anderson's pessimism as to the possibility of a serious modern drama.

With congratulations, and best wishes for its vigorous circulation and a long life,

Faithfully yours,
(Signed) ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

"REPORT me and my cause aright." We think our subscribers will take satisfaction in knowing that the Americanism that the FREEMAN represents is being presented to a thoughtful European public. We venture to suggest that there is still a large American public that needs to be introduced to the FREEMAN, and that none can perform that rite more effectively than a pleased reader.

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